

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 10 August 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. C. Gatere Maina

(Kenya)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. M. NATI  
Ms. H. TOUATI

Argentina: Mr. R. GARCIE-MORITAN  
Ms. N. NASCIMBENE

Australia: Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium: Mr. A. ONKELINX  
Mr. J.M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil: Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. R. DEHAINOV  
Mr. MIKAILOV

Burma: U MAUNG MAUNG GYI  
U THAN TUN

Canada: Mr. G.R. SKINNER  
Mr. J. GAUDREAU

China: Mr. TIAN JIN  
Mr. YU LENGJIA  
Mrs. WANG ZHIYUNG  
Mr. LI WEIMING  
Mr. SUO KAIMING

Cuba: Mr. SOLA VILA  
Mr. P. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. VEJVODA  
Mr. L. STAVINOMA

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN  
Miss W. BASSIM

Ethiopia: Mr. T. TERRELE  
Mr. F. YOHANNES

France: Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE  
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HERDER  
Mr. H. THIELICKE  
Mr. F. SAYATZ  
Mr. R. TRAPP  
Mr. J. DEMBSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. H. WEGENER  
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary: Mr. I. KOMIVES  
Mr. C. GYORFFY  
Mr. T. TOTH

India: Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia: Mr. N. SUTRESNA  
Mr. I. DAMANIK  
Mr. F. QASIM

Iran: Mr. J. ZAHIRNIA

Italy: Mr. M. ALESSI  
Mr. C.M. OLIVA  
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan: Mr. Y. OKAWA  
Mr. M. TAKAHASHI  
Mr. T. KAWAKITA  
Mr. T. ARAI

Kenya: Mr. C. GATERE MAINA  
Mr. D.D. DON NANJIRA  
Mr. J.M. KIBOI  
Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico: Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES  
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia: Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG  
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco: Mr. M. CHERAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. H. WAGENTIJKERS

Nigeria: Mr. G.O. IJEWERE  
Mr. W.O. AKINSALIYA  
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan: Mr. M. AHMAD  
Mr. M. AKRAM  
Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru: Mr. J. BENAVIDES DE LA SOTTA

Poland: Mr. B. SUJKA  
Mr. T. STROJWAS  
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ

Romania: Mr. I. DATCU  
Mr. T. MELESCANU  
Mr. M. BICHIR  
Mr. T. PANAIT  
Mr. M.S. DOGARU

Sri Lanka: Mr. A.T. JAYAKODDY

Sweden: Mr. C. LIDGARD  
Mr. H. BERGLUND  
Mr. J. LUNDIN  
Mr. S. EKHOLM

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN  
Mr. R.H. TIMMERBAYEV  
Mr. V.M. GANJA  
Mr. V.F. PRIACHIN  
Mr. V.L. GAI

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES

Miss J.E.F. WRIGHT

United States of America:

Mr. L.G. FIELDS

Mr. M.D. BUSBY

Ms. M. WINSTON

Mr. R. SCOTT

Venezuela:

Mr. R. RODRIGUEZ NAVARRO

Mr. J.A. ZARRAGA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. VRHUNEC

Zaire:

Ms. E. EKANGA KABEYA

Mr. O. GNOK

Secretary of the Committee on  
Disarmament and Personal  
Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the  
Committee on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the 177th plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Committee starts today its consideration of item 4 of its agenda, "Chemical weapons".

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Pakistan, the United States of America, Romania, Poland, Belgium and Indonesia.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the distinguished representative of Pakistan, His Excellency Ambassador Ahmad.

Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, we are very pleased to see you, the representative of a great and friendly African country, assume the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament at this crucial juncture of its work. Your vast diplomatic experience and skill assure us that we shall achieve optimum results in our proceedings during the current month.

May I also express out deep appreciation to Ambassador Okawa of Japan who, during the closing stages of our spring session, brought into play his acknowledged competence and comprehension to ensure that the Committee made a meaningful contribution to the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Datcu of Romania in our midst. He brings with him considerable experience in the field of security and disarmament, experience from which we shall all greatly benefit. At the same time, it is a sad duty to bid farewell to Ambassador Yu Peiwen of China and Ambassador Valdivieso of Peru who have both made important contributions to the work of this Committee.

The 1982 session of the Committee is resuming in the aftermath of the failure of the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament to achieve agreement on any of the important issues it considered. The irony, and indeed hypocrisy, involved in some of the blithe "conclusions" adopted at the end of the session will not pass unnoticed. It is important that in this Committee we do not participate in deluding ourselves about the gravity of the setback to the hopes and aspirations reposed by so many peoples and nations in the special session.

The special session did serve to focus public attention on the threat posed by the arms race. No one who witnessed the massive public rally in New York on 12 June can be in any doubt that disarmament is an aspiration which will, sooner rather than later, become irresistible. We sincerely hope that the World Disarmament Campaign, launched at the special session, will contribute to arousing universal public support for disarmament.

It is obvious that the failure of the special session must be placed in the perspective of the persistent deterioration in the international situation during the past four years. This was acknowledged in the conclusions approved by the special session. In this context, it is particularly relevant to remember the call by Mr. E. Rostow, the head of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, in his address to this Committee on 9 February this year, that "we move promptly and effectively to restore Article 2 (4)" -- i.e. the obligation not to use or threaten

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

to use force in international relations -- "as part of the living law of international politics". Today, in addition to the festering crises existing at that time, we are also confronted by the brutal Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the misery which this has brought to millions of innocent people. Thousands of Arabs and Palestinian men, women and children have been massacred and hundreds of thousands have been uprooted from their homes. The slaughter continues in full view of a world whose conscience appears to have been numbed by decades of Zionist propaganda and the sheer audacity of the aggression. As the President of Pakistan noted in a letter addressed to the Heads of State of the five permanent members of the Security Council, "the future of our civilization depends on whether we are capable of being stirred by such an appalling spectacle".

The obvious lesson of what has happened in the past few years to Lebanon, to Afghanistan and to Kampuchea, is that the lack of a credible capability for self-defence is a mortal sin for the small and weak nations of the world. Yet we must all recognize that, in the nuclear era, if the logic of security through military strength is espoused by the more than 150 nations, it will ultimately lead to disaster. Let us hope that sooner, rather than later -- and I quote the words of the distinguished representative of India -- "the illusion of political and military pre-eminence which is associated with the accumulation of armaments" will be discarded in favour of security through disarmament. The majority of non-aligned countries have demonstrated, most recently at the special session, their desire to ensure their security through a genuine and balanced process of disarmament. It is no accident that it is these States which are the most disturbed at the failure of the second special session.

The Pakistan delegation considers it particularly regrettable that the special session was unable to adopt a comprehensive programme of disarmament. This was to be the centrepiece of the session. Negotiations on the CPD broke down on the question of nuclear disarmament and, more specifically, over the issue of a nuclear test-ban treaty. It is no secret that during the negotiations the non-aligned countries demonstrated extraordinary flexibility which was, unfortunately, not matched by the positions of certain other groups. I say this not by way of recrimination but merely in order to set out the conditions in which negotiations on the CPD can be resumed. Before the Working Group begins consideration of the CPD, perhaps early next year, we must have an indication from certain major powers that they are prepared to respond positively to the numerous and reasonable compromise proposals submitted during the special session on the central elements of the CPD.

My delegation intends to participate energetically in the negotiations in the Ad hoc Working Group on a nuclear test ban. The experience of the special session and subsequent developments have, however, raised strong doubts in our mind about the prospects for this endeavour. The dissociation of one of the nuclear powers from the proceedings of this Working Group can hardly raise expectations that we are moving closer to a nuclear test ban. We also find it difficult to square the consensus for creation of this negotiating forum with the recent statement reportedly made on behalf of one of the major nuclear powers that "we're going to need testing, perhaps even testing above the 150 kiloton level, for a long time to come." Nor do we wish to see the exercise utilized for the purpose of clarifying bilateral verification problems arising in the context of international agreements to which we are not a party and about whose objectives we entertain serious doubts.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

The Ad Hoc Working Group has been asked to define, through substantive examination, the issues relating to the verification of a test ban-treaty. In our view, the first issue relating to verification is the scope of the test ban. In other words, is it our intention to prohibit "all nuclear tests in all environments for all time" -- as stated in relevant General Assembly resolutions -- or do we seek a prohibition of only nuclear weapons testing? The verification requirements of either alternative will be substantially different. If we choose the latter alternative, as the trilateral negotiators apparently did, what arrangements are to be envisaged for "peaceful nuclear explosions" and their verification? We would also be interested to know what verification and compliance measures can be envisaged to arrest the continued qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons through laboratory tests or simulation techniques that have reportedly been developed by some of the nuclear-weapon States. Some other relevant issues are also enumerated in the list of questions addressed by the Group of 21 to the trilateral negotiators last year in document CD/181.

The reticence of some of the nuclear-weapon States regarding the nuclear test-ban treaty also implies a shift in their position regarding the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. If these weapons are to be progressively reduced and ultimately eliminated, as envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document, they do not need to be tested "for a long time to come". If indeed we are correct in this evaluation, if indeed nuclear deterrence and the possession of nuclear arsenals is foreseen for the indefinite future, it will have profound consequences for the pursuit of disarmament. It is unreasonable to believe that for the foreseeable future, the non-nuclear-weapon States will agree to the existing and significant asymmetry in the distribution of world power denoted by the possession of nuclear weapons by five States. To discard the goal of nuclear disarmament will inevitably involve discarding the goal of nuclear non-proliferation and the two, taken together, will create a situation that is vastly more dangerous and unstable than even the nuclear precipice on which we stand today.

I would, therefore, urge those States which have so far persistently blocked the proposal to set up a working group on nuclear disarmament to reconsider their positions. My delegation believes that the elaboration of the process of nuclear disarmament as envisaged in the proposal of the Group of 21 in document CD/180 provides a reasonable basis for beginning the consideration of this subject. This exercise will not prejudice the positions of any of the nuclear-weapon States; it may, on the other hand, lead to the evolution of a meaningful consensus which could provide impetus for both multilateral and bilateral negotiations relating to nuclear disarmament.

Some States have emphasized the importance of the so-called START and INF negotiations being held currently in this city. We do not wish in any way to denigrate the importance of these negotiations. We must, however, express the legitimate hope that the objectives of the parties to these negotiations are indeed to bring about important reductions in their strategic and other nuclear arsenals, rather than mere posturing to play with public opinion which has manifested itself so categorically in recent months against the nuclear menace. This Committee also has a right to expect that it will be kept fully informed by the parties, individually or collectively, of the progress in these talks.



(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

The consistent interest exhibited by my delegation in promoting effective international arrangements to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons requires no reiteration. Yet we must admit that work on this item has reached an impasse. Before we adjourned for the special session, the Group of 21 issued a statement in document CD/280, which inter alia expressed the view "that further negotiations in the ad hoc working group on this item are unlikely to be fruitful so long as the nuclear-weapon States do not exhibit a genuine political will to reach a satisfactory agreement." The Group of 21 therefore urged "the nuclear-weapon States concerned to review their policies and to present revised positions on the subject to the second special session..." At the special session, there was no response at all to these concerns of the Group of 21 from two of the nuclear-weapon States concerned. My delegation of course noted the evolution in the French position at the special session. This is now almost identical with the positions of the United States and the United Kingdom and unfortunately suffers from the same shortcomings that arise from the unilateral declarations of those two countries on the subject.

At the special session, we also noted and welcomed the unilateral declaration made by President Brezhnev that the Soviet Union would not be the first to use nuclear weapons. Apart from its other implications, this declaration also seems to connote a shift in the Soviet position regarding assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. My delegation will study these implications most carefully and return to the subject at a later stage.

In the meantime, we consider that the non-first-use declaration made by the Soviet Union together with the similar declaration which was made by China more than a decade ago and reiterated at the special session offer an avenue to decrease the danger of a nuclear conflict. We have some difficulty in understanding the position of those who dismiss the Soviet non-first-use undertaking as being merely declaratory and unverifiable while they ask the non-nuclear-weapon States to accept at face value the unilateral declarations they themselves have made on the question of "negative security assurances". We can, of course, appreciate the difficulty encountered by some nuclear-weapon States which rely on nuclear deterrence to match the non-first-use undertaking at the present time. My delegation considers that the goal of an agreement on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons should be pursued in tandem with measures to eliminate the prevailing perceptions of imbalance in conventional weapons between the East and the West.

As in the case of "negative security assurances", it is obvious that the difficulties involved in the negotiations relating to the radiological weapons

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convention are fundamental in nature. Unless the scope of the proposed radiological weapons convention is substantially broadened, it will be a meaningless instrument designed to prohibit a non-existent and unlikely weapon. Therefore, negotiations on the item should be left in abeyance at least until next year. Nevertheless, as we have stated on several occasions, the question of the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities is a matter of immediate concern and worthy of independent treatment. My delegation reserves the right to raise the matter in an appropriate context.

The negotiations under way in the Working Group on Chemical Weapons under the guidance of Ambassador Sujka provide the most promising aspect of our current work. The contact groups established to examine various elements of the draft convention and to list all possible or compromise options could lead the Working Group to structure a comprehensive framework for the commencement of definitive negotiations on the text of the convention next year. This is an opportunity which we cannot afford to lose.

It would be only fitting if the Committee on Disarmament, in conjunction with the convening of the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space, could take some meaningful steps to avert the danger of the arms race spreading to this environment. As a first step, this Committee could propose the universal endorsement of the concept of outer space constituting "the common heritage of mankind". Pakistan shares the view that the Committee should create a working group on this item with an appropriate mandate.

In the wake of the failure of the second special session, this Committee indeed constitutes the single and only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. Its responsibilities, like its functions, are singular and onerous. It is here that we must seek to build the framework for a process of real and comprehensive disarmament. It is here that the reaffirmation by all States of the Final Document of the first special session will be put to the test.

The Pakistan delegation will participate in any efforts that are deployed to improve the effectiveness of the work of this Committee. Yet, we should all be clear in our minds that the failure of this Committee to make any substantive progress in negotiations during the past four years has little or nothing to do with the shortcomings, if any, in its machinery. Our failure, like that of the second special session, is due to the lack of the one factor essential for any negotiation -- the political will to reach agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America, His Excellency Ambassador Fields.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time I am taking the floor at this session, let me begin my remarks by congratulating you on your assumption of the Chair as we reconvene the Committee for its 1982 summer session. Your skills and wisdom are well known to my delegation, and your vast experience in disarmament and effectiveness as a Chairman assure us that our work will be productive and efficient. I would also like to welcome our new colleague, Ambassador Datcu of Romania, to note with regret the departure of Ambassadors Yu Peiwen of China and Valdivieso of Peru, and to bid farewell to our departing colleague and friend, Ambassador Venkateswaran of India, who will be leaving us next week to take up his new post in Beijing. All of our good wishes go with him. Finally, Sir, I would be remiss indeed if I did not pay special tribute to the distinguished representative of Japan, Ambassador Okawa, for his outstanding leadership of our Committee in the hectic final days of the spring session. His great wisdom and calm demeanour not only enabled us to complete our work here in Geneva but set a fine example for us as we took up our challenging responsibilities in New York.

A number of speakers have begun their remarks by commenting on the recently concluded second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. A number of assessments have been rendered. I would like to say from the outset that I do not count myself among those who seem to believe we limped back from a disaster with our tails between our legs. Certainly, no one can argue that the special session was a resounding success. Indeed, it failed to achieve even our minimal expectations in so far as those expectations were couched in terms of achieving dramatic advances on specific issues. But let us assess the results of the second special session in pragmatic terms. We should not be surprised or shocked by the result in the light of world events which have occurred during the brief four years since the first special session. In point of fact, was it credible to believe that we could repeat that success? Probably not. Nor, indeed, could we expect to resolve contentious issues which we have been unable to resolve in this smaller, more expert body. As our venerable colleague from Sweden, Mrs. Thorsson, pointed out last week, "the necessary prerequisites to reach beyond the ... Final Document simply did not exist."

My delegation had hoped to join in an effort in New York to develop a realistic assessment of our efforts over the past four years and the impact of nations' behaviour upon the efforts for disarmament. However, even this was not to be. Our efforts were thwarted by those who wanted us to ignore their actions and sought to deflect us with simplistic propaganda proposals presented as the solution to all of the disarmament dilemmas which have plagued us for decades. But we do not live in a vacuum. Success eluded us in New York, not because of any failure of political will, but rather because the present deterioration in the state of international affairs

(Mr. Fields, United States)

has thoroughly corroded the confidence of nations in their security. It is a problem which will not be solved by rhetoric, but by a return to the principles of the United Nations Charter. In his appearance before the special session, President Reagan challenged us all with these words:

"I have come to this hall to call for international recommitment to the basic tenet of the United Nations Charter -- that all Members practice tolerance and live together in peace as good neighbors under the rule of law, forsaking armed force as a means of settling disputes between nations."

Article 2, paragraph 4, of that Charter is an obligation for every Member State, only when we take that obligation seriously will disarmament become possible. If we are committed to disarmament, we must accept President Reagan's challenge and "finally make the Charter live."

Yet, we were unable to agree on even a factual accounting of recent events, a similar fate befell our efforts to chart a realistic course for our future efforts by concluding a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Everyone seems to be willing to agree on measures which do not affect their own interest. But success in this effort can only come through the realization that disarmament is a shared responsibility.

What do these sobering events mean for the future work of our Committee? Some have pointed out that in the four years of its existence, the Committee on Disarmament has failed to produce a single treaty. This is attributed to various causes. But in the view of my delegation the real lesson of the second special session is that this negotiating body cannot confine itself to a narrow view of the world. If it does, it is certainly in danger of becoming irrelevant to its true objective. We must draw on the experience of the special session and return to the main purpose of this body -- to negotiate concrete measures of disarmament. And in this regard, the future organization of our work is extremely important.

A number of speakers have given their views on the priority items before this Committee. Let me briefly set forth my delegation's views.

We believe that negotiating meaningful measures of nuclear disarmament is the most urgent task before us. The United States is currently engaged, together with the Soviet Union, in talks designed to eliminate on both sides the most threatening intermediate-range nuclear forces, and to make deep and substantial cuts in the levels of our respective strategic nuclear arsenals. More than any other measure, the successful conclusion of these negotiations will represent meaningful progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons -- a goal which certainly we all seek. My Government continues to hold a comprehensive test ban as an ultimate objective, although we believe that the present time is not propitious for the negotiation of such a ban. We have come to this session prepared to participate actively in the Working Group on a nuclear test ban which will deal with the vital issues of verification and compliance. We believe this Working Group can make a useful contribution to the work of our Committee. I wish also to note our continued dedication to work in the Group of Scientific Experts which opened its session yesterday. We believe that the Group should continue to develop procedures for an international data exchange system to the maximum extent that modern technology will allow.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

A great deal of effort has been invested in, and progress made toward the conclusion of a treaty banning radiological weapons. In fact, this measure is nearer completion than any other before this body. At our last session, the able Chairman of the radiological weapons Working Group devised a method of work which seemed to my delegation to offer hope for the conclusion of a radiological weapons treaty. My delegation has been among those which have questioned the necessity of entering into negotiations on the protection of nuclear facilities -- and we have been critical of delegations which have blocked our progress on the conclusion of a radiological weapons treaty pending the resolution of the nuclear facilities issue.

The time has come to assess this situation with more realism. We believe that the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting radiological weapons is in our interest, and in the broader interest of mankind. At the same time, we fully understand the concern of those who have advocated negotiations on the further protection of nuclear facilities. We, therefore, have come to this session prepared to participate vigorously and constructively in discussions on this issue. We remain unconvinced of the linkage between radiological weapons and the nuclear facilities issue. But we are prepared to engage ourselves seriously on the merits of the issues, and will not stand in the way of any reasonable procedure which facilitates substantial progress.

At this session, some have advocated the establishment of a working group to deal with the issue of outer space. Many among these advocates confess limited knowledge of this complex and highly technical subject and see the working group as a means to educate us. My delegation supports an examination of the outer space issues by this Committee. Substantive discussions can serve to focus the issues and provide an informed basis for any future consideration. Only minimal discussion of the outer space issue has taken place in the Committee and we have not even heard preliminary views from some delegations.

My delegation remains unconvinced that the establishment of a working group would be the wisest course for us at this time. We would, however, strongly support a number of formal or informal plenary sessions being devoted to the subject of outer space. Only after a full airing of all delegations' views and a great deal of substantive preparation can we begin to focus our efforts.

The Working Group on Chemical Weapons has been meeting since 20 July. My delegation has participated actively and energetically in the chemical weapons deliberations, and we will continue to do so. We place an extremely high priority on the achievement of a complete and effective ban on chemical weapons, as evidence continues to mount regarding the use of prohibited toxin weapons in South-East Asia and chemical warfare against freedom fighters in Afghanistan, it is imperative that major emphasis be placed on making progress in this field, especially in defining and agreeing upon the necessary measures of verification and compliance.

My Government listened with interest to the statement by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union at the second special session regarding verification of a chemical weapons convention, and we have carefully scrutinized the draft proposals which he laid before that body. We hope the Soviet Union will explain what lies behind some of the very general language which it has presented. Unfortunately,

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that has not as yet been done, we have been disappointed by the reluctance on the part of the Soviet Union and its allies to engage in serious discussions, or to respond to substantive inquiries with respect to their proposals. I will speak at our Thursday meeting in more detail regarding chemical weapons and intend at that time to elaborate further on our views as to how rapid progress can be made toward the achievement of a convention.

I have not spoken about all the issues before the Committee, not because of any wilful neglect, or lack of interest, but rather for the sake of brevity, I shall, in future statements set forth my delegation's views on other issues and amplify my remarks today.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Romania, His Excellency Ambassador Datcu.

Mr. DATCU (Romania) (translated from French): My statement today will be devoted to the subject of chemical weapons which, according to the programme of work we have adopted, is the topic for our discussions this week.

The work which has been done in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons since 20 July 1982 and the meetings held, with the participation of experts, on certain selected topics prompt some comments from my delegation on the present stage and the future prospects of our negotiations on this topic.

I should like first of all to stress the fact that our discussions have revealed a general desire to achieve results on the subject of this terrifying weapon of mass destruction which exists in the military arsenals of certain States.

In addition to the compilation of concrete suggestions in this connection contained in document CD/CW/WP.33 we now have the constructive proposal submitted by the Soviet Union (in document CD/294) for the Basic Provisions of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

Furthermore, other concrete proposals are constantly being put forward by various delegations, in the form of working papers or suggestions made in the course of the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

We believe that at this stage of our negotiations, we should concentrate our efforts on reaching at least broad agreement on the basic provisions of the future convention.

Since, as the recent special session of the General Assembly indicated, a certain political will towards this end exists, since there is no lack of concrete proposals and since substantial preparatory work has already been done over recent years, we believe that the necessary conditions exist for bringing to the United Nations General Assembly real results in the matter of the elaboration of a convention outlawing chemical weapons.

(Mr. Datcu, Romania)

We ought therefore to give particular attention to the main areas of disagreement.

With your permission, I would like to dwell today on the question of the purpose of the future convention, one of the difficulties we are facing in our negotiations.

As you know, my delegation has always favoured the conclusion of a convention having a broad sphere of application and offering the best guarantees for the exclusion of chemical weapons from the arsenals of all States. It is this basic position which has guided us in studying the proposals for the inclusion of the non-use of chemical weapons and the concept of chemical warfare capability among the prohibitions which are to form the subject of the convention.

I do not wish to put forward any new arguments for or against these ideas, and in any case, I believe that the time for doing so is past. The delegations concerned have already done so. I would simply like to submit a few comments on them on behalf of my delegation.

The idea of prohibiting chemical warfare capability is obviously prompted by the desire to achieve a broad and effective prohibition -- a concern shared by my delegation, as indeed, I believe, by all of us. This idea nevertheless raises certain difficulties, both from the conceptual point of view and as regards its practical verification. We believe that thinking of it in terms of future application, after the convention has been in force for a certain time, might perhaps offer a solution.

As for the use of chemical weapons and their express prohibition in first Element of the future convention, we believe that the opposing views are too well known to need repeating here.

As we see it, however, two points have been emphasized by all delegations. The first is that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the convention we are now negotiating are two legal instruments linked by the very fact that they both deal with chemical weapons. The second is that any use of chemical weapons will clearly constitute a violation of the convention we are negotiating, which will prohibit the parties from developing, producing, otherwise acquiring, stockpiling, retaining or transferring chemical weapons and at the same time require them to destroy stocks and dismantle facilities.

My delegation believes that these two points offer a basis for reaching a compromise between the contrary views expressed, so permitting us to move forward in our work.

One possible way of proceeding which we would like to put before the Committee for its consideration is the following:

(a) To complete the first Element of the convention without including a reference to the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons;

(b) To include in the preamble to the convention a paragraph referring to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and reaffirming the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons, and to include in Element VII another reference to the Geneva Protocol stating that the convention should not be interpreted as in any way limiting or detracting from the obligations assumed by States on the basis of the 1925 Geneva Protocol; and

(Mr. Datcu, Romania)

(c) To introduce a new article into the convention recognizing that any use of chemical weapons constitutes a violation of the convention and that therefore the provisions concerning verification of the future convention will apply also to such situations.

As I said, this is a possible way of proceeding; if delegations could accept it, I think that it would provide a solution to a very important problem that is as yet unresolved.

My last comments concern technical matters, which are playing a larger and larger part in our work. The consultations with the participation of experts which took place last week on technical questions relating to the determination of the toxicity of certain chemical agents and verification of the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons were useful in providing clarifications and precisions which will facilitate our work.

With regard to the application of the toxicity criterion to other harmful chemicals it seems to us that the consultations have shown fairly clearly that there are at present no adequate methods for determining incapacitating and other harmful effects. This being so, we believe that for the purposes of the future convention the best solution might be to draw up a purely illustrative list of some chemical agents falling within this category.

We have still not succeeded in formulating a satisfactory definition of the "precursors" of chemical agents. In view of the difficulties of applying the toxicity criterion in this case, we believe that here again, the drawing up of a list of the "principal precursors" is a solution to be considered.

Obviously, the technical problems relating to monitoring of the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons are extremely complex. As the consultations with the participation of experts made clear, we are only at the beginning of this process. As negotiations in the Working Group proceed, with the help of the experts, further efforts with a view to elaborating the technical methods needed in this area are proving to be necessary.

Those are the observations my delegation wished to make at this stage of our negotiations on chemical weapons, and the suggestions we wanted to put before the Committee. I would like to assure you again, Mr. Chairman, as also your colleague, Ambassador Sujka, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, that as in the past the Romanian delegation will spare no effort to contribute to the progress of our work.



Mr. SUJKA (Poland): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Polish delegation I welcome you to the Chair of the Committee on Disarmament. I am fully convinced that under your able and skilful guidance this Committee will use all the opportunities offered to make a step forward in the fulfilment of its responsible tasks which the whole international community is closely following. I should like to assure you on behalf of my delegation you can count on our full co-operation and assistance in your responsible task.

For your predecessor in the Chair, Ambassador Yoshio Okawa of Japan, I have always had very sincere respect -- and I am happy to repeat it at this moment again -- for his valuable contribution to the work done by the Committee at its spring session.

It is also my great pleasure to welcome among us the representative of a brotherly socialist country and my immediate neighbour at this table, Ambassador Datcu of Romania.

Bearing in mind that, in accordance with the Committee's programme of work, this week is to be devoted to the subject of chemical weapons, my intervention today will be concentrated mainly on this particular agenda item.

My delegation has followed with great interest all the interventions in plenary meetings of this Committee devoted to chemical weapons. With the same undiminished attention we shall follow interventions which are going to be pronounced on the said agenda item. It is encouraging to note that all delegations which took the floor before me declared their readiness to recognize the priority character and primary significance of the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. I would like to express my conviction that these very favourable declarations will be followed by concrete contributions to the elaboration of compromise formulations in the quite many controversial issues which the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons has on its negotiating table. The Committee on Disarmament being at present the only forum for negotiations on a chemical weapons ban, it has an exceptional role to play if both members and non-members alike have the will to reach an agreement on a complete elimination of this weapon of mass destruction as early as expected by the international community and as early as necessary in order to remove this weapon from military arsenals and from scientific laboratories.

The question of the elaboration of a convention on chemical weapons is clearly stated in the Group's mandate the pertinent portion of which I should like to quote once more: "The Committee on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1982 session, an ad hoc Working Group of the Committee to elaborate such a convention, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives with a view to enabling the Committee to achieve agreement at the earliest date ...". Numerous resolutions of consecutive sessions of the United Nations General Assembly are equally clear in their letter and spirit in this respect. A strong note on the earliest possible elaboration of a convention resounded during the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. If we take into account the above on the one hand and the growing danger of a chemical arms race, also a qualitative one, on the other, we must realize that we find ourselves at a crossroads from which one way leads to an accelerated chemical arms race. We do not want to follow it. But there is another way, the way of peaceful, quite negotiations on the cessation of the arms race in chemical weapons and the

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destruction of their stockpiles and means of their production. This is the way we want to follow. I am persuaded that the Soviet proposal entitled "Basic provisions of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction" shows such a way. It is, therefore, only natural that the Soviet "Basic provisions" have been universally recognized as a considerable impulse to the acceleration of serious negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. In our considered view, the Soviet document covers all existing proposals and, at the same time, goes further to make very many new ones; it also dispels doubts that have been heard, inter alia, in this Committee. In other words, we have at present great possibilities for gaining momentum in the negotiations and, responding to the appeals for the elaboration of a convention, we ought to use this opportunity to have its draft elaborated.

It is exactly to this end that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons resumed its regular meetings on 20 July and continues its work with quite an intensive pace.

As this year's Chairman of the said Working Group, I wish to emphasize, first of all, the excellent atmosphere which is maintained by all delegations participating in the work on a convention at the present stage. I am glad to inform this Committee that in the more than 10 meetings which the Chemical Weapons Group has held between 20 July and today, we have been able to discuss in considerable detail, on both a formal and an informal basis, practically all questions and issues on the future convention. Very many more consultations were held by six informal contact groups which are continuing their efforts to elaborate specific compromise provisions. In addition to the above, consultations of the delegations with the participation of experts, on certain technical issues related to a chemical weapons convention were held over the last full working week. To complete the description of the Group's activities, let me inform the Committee that the six informal groups I have just mentioned are doing their homework in the following spheres of the future convention:

The question of the inclusion or not of a provision prohibiting the use of chemical weapons;

Definitions of numerous technical terms to be used in the convention;

General provisions on verification;

Destruction, dismantling or diversion for permitted purposes of declared stocks of chemical weapons and their means of production;

Declarations of possession of stocks of chemical weapons and means of their production; plans for their destruction or diversion for permitted purposes and time-frames as well as forms for making such declarations;

Other remaining issues, inter alia, the convention's preamble, its relationship with other treaties, international co-operation in the implementation of the convention and its entry into force, as well as many other legal aspects.

The open-minded informal discussions on the complex problem of verification machinery for a future convention have revealed that the Working Group would favour the elaboration of one article containing general provisions on verification

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

to be followed by several others providing all necessary details on the procedures, provisions on national and international verification measures, national technical means, establishment of a consultative body, etc. Equally frank and useful discussions have been and still are being conducted on the question of the inclusion or not of a provision prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. This controversial problem of great juridical and political significance still, as is well known, divides the members of the Committee. However, some optimistic signs can be found here and there in the statements by some delegations of their willingness to consider several possible solutions which are under discussion. We have just heard in the statement of the Romanian Ambassador about these possible solutions.

Having gone through the preparatory work at the end of July, the Working Group is now entering a most intensive as well as most important phase of its work this session. Having the possibility of holding three meetings a week, I hope that, through the collective effort of the whole Group, it will be able to report to the Committee at the end of this session considerable progress achieved in all spheres of the future convention. Therefore, while thanking all delegations for their warm words of encouragement and assistance, I appeal for their forbearance and understanding in giving their staff members the necessary time for active participation in the discussions of numerous -- as we call them -- informal homework groups. At the same time, I encourage the leaders of the delegations to take direct and personal interest in the Group's proceedings. In practical terms, this is how I understand the priority nature of the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, quite rightly emphasized by very many delegations. Responding to that, in a sense, I for my part would like to point out that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons provides an adequate and necessary framework for all the delegations, facilitating the transformation of their declarations in this respect into deeds.

Some delegations have already considered it just and right to jump to conclusions and have made pessimistic prophecies about our present efforts. This is premature, to say the least. I am all for intensive work which could lead us to reaching our target. I do realize that we shall not be able to elaborate a uniform draft text of a convention during this session. But certainly, possible texts for very many elements seem to be a realistic target for this session. And all of us should do all we can for the Group to reach this target. Personally, I am persuaded that working to reach a determined target is a stimulating factor in our endeavours.

Let me now make a few observations on the most urgent and important issues considered in this Committee: nuclear disarmament and a complete ban on nuclear tests. How many words, how many speeches have already been pronounced to denounce the nuclear arms race and to protest against this most brutal dilemma of the present generation. Again and again we repeat these words also in this chamber. Yet neither the special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, nor the countless resolutions of that body and of many other organizations and conferences, including this Committee, have yielded any specific, promising results. Yet it is our duty to continue to denounce the gravity of the situation caused by the arms race and particularly the nuclear arms race. With ever-renewed efforts we must continue to seek possible, negotiated solutions to stop this race. We do have enough bold, imaginative proposals for negotiations, enough bold and imaginative examples to follow. I would like to mention at this

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moment only one: the Soviet initiative of historic, political significance -- a unilateral obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. This initiative of our Soviet ally -- the most important initiative announced from the rostrum of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament -- has been generally and universally accepted by the international community as a further step towards a complete ban on the use of nuclear weapons. It cannot but be disquieting and disturbing, therefore, to read the contents of an article by prominent West German authors on the question of the use of nuclear weapons. The publication, at the time of the second special session, of such an article advising "... the first use of nuclear weapons by the Western Alliance ...", even if the authors call this use "defensive" and, furthermore, expressing the opinion that "... a credible renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons would, once again, make war more probable ..." must be seen as something more than a political credo; it must be considered as a confession of the political aims and aspirations of some of the prominent members of the "Western Alliance". The fact that the text of this article was distributed to delegations of the Committee on Disarmament after the Soviet undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, after the second special session and just before the opening of this Committee's session, clearly shows who wants, if I may be permitted to quote the same West German authors again, "... to make war probable ...". I should add that the article referred to above contains polemics with American authors who discuss the possibility of the assumption of such an obligation by the United States.

While I have the floor I would also like to touch upon one more question which in the short history of this Committee has been giving rise to many lively discussions: the efficiency of the Committee on Disarmament. I do not want, at this moment, to recall and repeat the many ideas that have already been expressed in numerous documents including the ones reflecting the views of the Polish delegation. In fact, I wish to touch upon only one specific aspect of this urgent problem: how to make more efficient the present structures which are at our disposal in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure?

The subsidiary bodies which have already been or will in the future be set up by the Committee should, indeed, become the forums of real negotiation processes. But, as experience shows, they are still not. In this connection, I would suggest the holding of several well-prepared plenary or informal meetings of the Committee devoted exclusively to the elaboration of adequate and clear recommendations on the work of its subsidiary bodies. Such recommendations should definitely take into account the present state of the negotiation process in each particular Group. The groups, for their part, should have the possibility of reporting to the Committee on the state of their work more often than they have done up to now, and of putting before the Committee their difficult, sometimes maybe even very narrow questions in order to obtain perhaps some advice and/or guidelines from the plenary Committee. Furthermore, it would be advisable, particularly in the intensive negotiation process, for the subsidiary bodies not to consider their formal meetings as the only way of working. It seems, indeed, that they should look for all possible ways of reaching agreement through informal consultations, particularly consultations by those delegations which have different views on a given specific matter. In other words, it would be worthwhile to think about how to ensure the indispensable flexibility of methods and forms of action of the subsidiary bodies. In my view, this would constitute one of the possible levers permitting an intensification of work and thus increasing the efficiency of the Committee on Disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Poland for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Belgium, His Excellency Ambassador Onkelinx.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): I do not think it would be very useful in this Committee and at this stage of our work, to make a statement which would seek to establish responsibilities and to draw general lessons from the situation which prevailed at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Nevertheless, I think that the possibilities offered by multilateral negotiations on disarmament matters are now clearer, as compared with the multilateral deliberative approach which, it must be recognized, has produced virtually no concrete results apart from the hardly won and, in a sense, fragile achievement of 1973. Since the resumption of our session we have heard many statements, some of them polemical and at times aggressive in tone. We do not think that the latter constitute useful contributions to our work. It is more imperative than ever that each of us, far from engaging in polemics, should ask himself what is the best way of advancing our discussions, particularly on the priority items on our agenda.

For it is of the utmost urgency that the Committee on Disarmament should demonstrate its capacity to negotiate and to produce concrete results.

Negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons -- the item recommended for our discussions in plenary this week -- constitute, for the immediate future, the most appropriate way of making such a demonstration, for the following reasons:

The problem is a vital one, affecting the security of all;

The Committee is unanimous in its will to draft such a convention, and we have just heard Ambassador Sujka, the Chairman of the Working Group, give us his views and tell us of the good atmosphere which is at present prevailing in his Group;

The various parameters for such negotiations have now been clearly defined; and

New proposals have been made, particularly by the USSR, which deserve careful study.

My country attaches great importance to the speedy conclusion of these negotiations, and we hope that the Committee will be able to make the necessary procedural arrangements for devoting all the time necessary to this work, if need be going beyond the closing date of this session.

Several important conceptual problems remain to be settled. One of them, to which I would like to limit my statement today, concerns whether or not the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons should be included in the scope of the convention. It was to this same subject that Ambassador Dacu devoted a large part of his statement, and I listened to him with interest. He knew the arguments relating to the two theses, and I shall not repeat them.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The Working Group has certainly made progress in its attempt to find alternative formulas to these two approaches. In conducting this exercise we have been able to see the close link that exists between the scope of the convention we are elaborating, the prohibitions set forth in the Geneva Protocol, and verification of compliance with the prohibition of use.

The 1925 Geneva Protocol was the basis of a lengthy undertaking aimed at the complete prohibition of all chemical and bacteriological weapons. In the provisions of the Protocol itself, the prohibition of use was intended to cover all chemical and bacteriological weapons. A problem would be created if a new regime relating to use were introduced solely for chemical weapons, bacteriological weapons being left aside. In this connection it is noteworthy that the 1972 Convention on Bacteriological Weapons carefully avoided saying anything about the prohibition of use, merely recalling, in its preamble, the provisions of the Geneva Protocol. Furthermore, a certain symmetry has been observed so far in the elaboration of measures aimed at the total prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons. Thus, after a period of joint negotiation on the two questions, the 1972 Convention on Bacteriological Weapons prescribed, in its article IX, the continuation of the negotiations only on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. There is no reference in the article to the prohibition of their use. We have to bear this symmetry in mind if we wish to organize the regime of prohibition emerging from the Geneva Protocol in the broadest manner possible.

Verification of compliance with the prohibition of use also raises a number of questions. We think that the development of such a mechanism, both for bacteriological and for chemical weapons, would meet a requirement felt by the international community, since its absence has been the cause of many disputes and of much friction between States over the past decades. The modalities of such verification must be specific to the matter prohibited. Thus the provisions in this respect must be different from those relating to verification of the prohibition of development, production and stockpiling, as well as those relating to destruction. It is also becoming apparent that, in view of the interrelationship between the subjects and the symmetry between the regimes for the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons, this type of verification should be aimed at ensuring compliance with the prohibition of the use of both categories of weapons at the same time.

The link between scope and verification in the context of a single instrument is also something to be thought about. For it would be difficult to include in a convention on chemical weapons a system of verification which would apply to prohibitions not explicitly mentioned in the convention.

These are the main considerations which underlie the initiative taken by Belgium at the special session when it submitted a memorandum on monitoring of the prohibition of the use in combat of chemical and bacteriological weapons. We are now submitting this text to the Committee in document CD/301/CD/CW/WP.39, in the hope that this initiative will help us in our joint effort to find a solution to the problem of the use of chemical weapons.

I shall refrain from describing the contents of the document. I should simply like to emphasize its basic objectives.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The first objective is to make good the gaps in the 1925 Protocol by proposing a verification mechanism which would apply to all situations of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in combat. We would at the same time also settle the debate on the scope of the Protocol by providing that the prohibition relating to use covers all chemical and bacteriological weapons, not only in time of war but more generally in combat.

The second objective is to resolve the problem posed by the question of use with respect to the convention on chemical weapons.

And lastly, the third objective is to provide for a flexible mechanism which could be agreed on quickly and enter into force even before the convention on chemical weapons. The composition of the proposed advisory committee (at the present stage all the States parties to the 1925 Protocol and to the 1972 Convention on Bacteriological Weapons) and the conditions for entry into force (a very small number of ratifications, we believe) as we envisage them, are such as to permit the system very quickly to begin functioning.

The mechanism we have in mind could take the form of an instrument sui generis, whose links with existing instruments -- the 1925 Protocol and the 1972 Convention on Bacteriological Weapons -- as well as with the ongoing negotiations on chemical weapons, could be clearly and easily described.

I have expressed the hope that this initiative will in particular, help us in our joint efforts in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. We hope in this way to stimulate the search for an option which may be able to satisfy the supporters of the two opposing theses and which may also prove useful at the level of international law.

My delegation will, of course, be ready to provide, particularly in the Working Group, any clarifications which may be desired with regard to this document.

I have deliberately chosen to confine this statement to one particular item on the Committee's agenda out of a desire to help advance our work. The Committee's effectiveness would gain much if all delegations were to refrain, in future, from reaffirming political positions known to everyone, from making accusations, and from resorting to charges of ill faith.

Our work must not at any time be transformed into a mere forum for impressing the outside world. The international community would probably be more convinced of the role of the Committee on Disarmament if the Committee were to give it more often some evidence of the real efforts which we are all willing to make to try to reach concrete agreements.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Belgium for his statement and for the kind remarks that he has addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Indonesia, His Excellency Ambassador Sutresna.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, I would like at the outset to extend the congratulations of my delegation to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee for the month of August. We are confident that your wise counsel and vast diplomatic experience will contribute to the furtherance of the Committee's

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

work. It is of particular pleasure for me personally as head of the Indonesian delegation to welcome to the Chair of our Committee, you, Sir, the representative of Kenya, a country with which Indonesia has entered recently into a new stage in its bilateral relations, heralding a more concrete and mutually beneficial co-operation between our two countries.

I also wish to express the appreciation and gratitude of the Indonesian delegation to your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Okawa of Japan, for his commendable chairmanship of the Committee during the preceding period. The skill, perseverance and dedication that he exhibited, particularly at the time just prior to the conclusion of the Committee's work in the spring session in the view of my delegation greatly contributed to the reaching of the stage in which our Committee finds itself today.

To His Excellency Ambassador Dacu of Romania, I wish to join previous speakers in offering a welcome to the Committee. My delegation looks forward to continuing co-operation with his delegation.

Our present session was, exactly one month ago today, preceded by the unfruitful conclusion of the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Distinguished representatives who have spoken before me have addressed themselves to this most regrettable episode in the multilateral disarmament process. The inability of the second special session to produce meaningful results has compelled us, each and every member of the Committee on Disarmament, to engage in deep reflections and assess the present state of affairs regarding our joint disarmament efforts. We believe it is incumbent upon all the members of this Committee to develop new approaches as well as to find ways and means with a view to ensuring a more effective functioning of the Committee on Disarmament, lest we fail in our duty and responsibility. Much has been said on how and why the special session did not accomplish the task that was set before it, both at the end of that session and in the plenary meetings of our Committee. My delegation gave its own assessment of the matter at the conclusion of the special session. I need hardly emphasize that the most serious obstacle to the success of the second special session was, among other things, the increasing suspicion and distrust prevailing in the relations between the major powers, and in particular between the superpowers. The special session turned out to be another arena for furthering their antagonism towards each other in this regard, which frustrated the legitimate demand of the international community for the establishment of world peace and security through real disarmament measures. My delegation submits, with all sincerity and humility, that in order to prevent such a situation from recurring, it is necessary for those States to show by real and concrete deeds their commitment to existing obligations and agreements. Otherwise, if such a situation constitutes a trend and permeates all other international forums including this sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, then I am afraid that the raison d'être and the viability of this body will be put to a serious test.

It is the Indonesian delegation's considered view, however, that the second special session should not be judged only by its failure and shortcomings. We should look at the meagre results achieved there in their proper perspective, that is, with the knowledge that the road to reach our ultimate goal of a general and complete disarmament is indeed very complex and arduous, and requires constant and imaginative thinking and rethinking on our part in our endeavours to give expression to our reaffirmation of the Final Document.



(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

This is where the importance of this session of the Committee on Disarmament lies. We are entering a stage where new efforts should be made with more vigour, while at the same time far-sightedness coupled with objectivity should be our guide. Our summer session will be a relatively short one. It is imperative, therefore, that the Committee should work with a deep sense of urgency and priority.

Progress should not be unduly hindered or jeopardized by the misuse of the notion of consensus on procedural questions. The Indonesian delegation is of the view that the Committee should immediately start its real work on the highest priority item, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", by setting up a working group. We strongly believe that nuclear disarmament is not the concern solely of those who own nuclear weapons and arsenals, but is indeed the major concern of mankind as a whole. This has been amply demonstrated by the increasingly manifest world opinion shared by growing numbers of people in many parts of the world. It is certainly incorrect to believe that the fate of mankind should be subjected to the political expediencies of certain powers. The working group, when it is established, will have a useful document contained in CD/116 dated 9 July 1980 proposed by the Group of 21, on the basis of which it could start its work. In this connection, the Indian proposal on the prevention of nuclear war, in the opinion of my delegation, is indeed of the utmost importance inasmuch as its thrust has a direct bearing on our common survival. This subject could well be taken up as a priority item in the proposed working group. We feel that it is already time to abandon the practice of dealing with item 2 of our agenda through informal meetings. Experience has shown us that this procedure is inadequate and leads us nowhere.

Another important item that the Committee should focus on during the summer session is that of chemical weapons. The work done by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons during the two weeks before the start of the summer session of the Committee on Disarmament under the able leadership of Ambassador Sujka of Poland deserves our appreciation. Through informal working arrangements and by dealing with each of the elements of the package under discussion in different small groups, assisted by the positive atmosphere prevailing in the discussions, the Working Group has made some progress that could lead the Group to proceed further towards the objective of drawing up a draft convention on chemical weapons. It is certainly our common duty and responsibility to ensure that during this summer session the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons will be able to make further headway so that it may live up to our expectations. And one way of doing this is by encouraging small groups and informal consultations which have proved to be useful during the pre-session consultations as I indicated earlier.

One of the important results of our spring session is the establishment of the Working Group on a nuclear test ban. Needless to say my delegation, for one, is anxious to see the Working Group commence its substantive work as soon as possible. We all have to make serious efforts to overcome the difficulties that seem to stand in the way. The findings which have been made so far by the seismic experts Group should, in the view of my delegation, contribute to the solution of the problems in the matter of verification. But the most important thing is how to translate these technical findings into a political consensus. In this connection it might be useful to recall the statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations that "all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem had been so fully explored that only a political decision was necessary in order to achieve agreement" (CD/86).

(Mr. Sutrasna, Indonesia)

Another important item with which our Committee should deal during the summer session is that of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. Indonesia has been and will remain committed to the established legal principles concerning the peaceful uses of outer space. Indonesia is an active member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The "creeping" use of outer space for non-peaceful purposes by certain space powers, despite the existence of appropriate international legal instruments against such activities, has raised serious concern on our part, as well as, I believe, on the part of the majority of the community of nations. My delegation is of the view that the Committee should agree on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on outer space. In order to facilitate its work on this item, the Committee may consider the possibilities of co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Our Committee might also deem it appropriate to take advantage of and to benefit from the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space (UNISPACE II) now taking place in Vienna.

I have just highlighted certain important issues on which the Committee, we believe, should focus during the summer session. The fact that I have not made any mention of other important issues should not be construed as implying that there is a decline of interest in them on our part.

The failure of the second special session to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament does not in any way change our conviction that the CPD should also be given equal priority in the work of our Committee. My delegation holds the view that after we have all given to it the seemingly needed time for deep reflection, with the imagination of all members of the Committee, it should be possible to arrive at agreement that the CPD should not in any way undermine the Final Document but, on the contrary, should clearly reflect it and advance therefrom. For practical purposes, however, I consider it appropriate for the Committee to have decided that the recently re-established Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador García Robles, will not resume its formal substantive work until early next year. In this connection I wish to submit that we agree with the understanding that has been reached that the distinguished Working Group Chairman may utilize to the maximum the present summer session for informal consultations for the purpose of finding ways and means to ensure the more effective functioning of the Working Group when it takes up substantive issues early next year. On other remaining important issues, e.g. negative security assurances and radiological weapons, we also share the view expressed in this Committee that these matters might be more effectively dealt with after further reflection.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to submit that it is of overriding importance that we, each and every one of us, in embarking on our work during this summer session, should demonstrate with real deeds the assertion to the effect that we were not discouraged by the disappointing results of the second special session. Let us all try more seriously to recapture and re-enliven the momentum of the pursuit of peace and security through multilateral disarmament negotiations. For as you rightly pointed out in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, the Committee on Disarmament, precisely because of what has not been achieved at the second special session, is now confronted with a challenge that we individually and collectively should meet.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement and for the kind remarks that he has addressed to the Chair.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 12 August, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.