

# CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

CCD/PV.557  
18 April 1972  
ENGLISH

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 18 April 1972, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. R. S. GUERREIRO

(Brazil)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Argentina:

Mr. M.E. DELPECH

Brazil:

Mr. R.S. GUERREIRO

Mr. L.A. de ARAUJO CASTRO

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV

Mr. O. MITEV

Burma:

Canada:

Mr. G. IGNATIEFF

Mr. R.W. CLARK

Mr. R.E. MOORE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. VEJVODA

Mr. J. STRUCKA

Mr. M. STEMBERA

Egypt:

Mr. EL SAYED EL REEDY

Ethiopia:

Mr. M. IMRU

Mr. T. GEBRU

Hungary:

Mr. I. KÖMIVES

Mr. J. PETRAN

India:

Mr. P.K. BANERJEE

Mr. K.P. JAIN

Mr. G. SHANKAR

Italy:

Mr. R. CARACCIOLO

Mr. E. GIUFFRIDA

Mr. R. BORSARELLI

Mr. P. BRUNI

Japan:  
Mr. M. NISIBORI  
Mr. H. OTSUKA  
Mr. H. MATSUMOTO  
Mr. I. YAMAMOTO

Mexico:  
Mr. M. MARIN  
Mrs. M. PRIETO

Mongolia:  
Mr. O. KHOSBAYAR  
Mr. Z. ERENDO

Morocco:  
Mr. M.A.A. KHATTABI

Netherlands:  
Mr. M.J. ROSENBERG POLAK  
Mr. A.J. ETTEMA

Nigeria:  
Mr. J.D.O. SOKOYA  
Mr. A.A. OLUMIDE

Pakistan:  
Mr. N. MIRZA

Poland:  
Mr. S. TOPA  
Mr. A. CZERKAWSKI  
Mr. R. WLAZLO

Romania:  
Mr. C. ENE  
Mr. C. MITRAN  
Mr. N. CHILIE

Sweden:  
Mrs. A. MYRDAL  
Mr. L. ECKERBERG  
Mr. U. REINIUS

Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics:  
Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN  
Mr. Y.K. NAZARKINE  
Mr. V.M. BASKAKOV  
Mr. A.I. BELOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. N.C. HAINWORTH  
Mr. D.F. DUNCAN  
Mr. T. MASEFIELD  
Mr. R. HOULISTON

United States of America:

Mr. J. MARTIN  
Mr. A.R. DAY  
Mr. W. GIVAN  
Mr. M.H.A. VAN HEUVEN

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC  
Mr. M. FILIPOVIC

Special Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. ILKKA PASTINEN

Alternate Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

Communiqué of the meeting

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 557th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador R.S. Guerreiro, representative of Brazil.

Statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, Brazil and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and by the Chairman.

The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 20 April 1972, at 10.30 a.m.

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Mr. HAINWORTH (United Kingdom): I shall speak today on the subject of chemical weapons. This seems by common consent to have emerged as the chief topic before the Committee at the present time.

The United Kingdom delegation has maintained in the past that once a Biological Weapons (**BW**) Convention had set the problems of biological warfare on one side it would be possible to consider more clearly the difficulties of chemical weapons (**CW**). With this in mind my delegation proposes to share its thinking with the Committee, even if to date we have found no solution and have no ready-made panaceas to offer. We believe that in this way we may be able to identify those avenues which may prove more promising for our collective efforts, and may help the Committee to avoid those lines which do not seem to us to lead anywhere. Only with the co-operation of all members of the Committee shall we be able to make constructive progress.

The crux of the problem before us, as the representative of the Netherlands made so clear on 23 March, is that we are trying to reinforce the ban on use contained in the Geneva Protocol of 1925. To that end we concluded the BW Convention; and to that end also we are considering the problem of chemical weapons. We are all aware that in effect the Protocol, by virtue of the many reservations to it, amounts in practice only to a ban on first use. Clearly any measures designed to ensure that the means of use are not available must increase the likelihood that chemical weapons will not be used. Our aim should be therefore to work towards an effective ban on the possession of chemical weapons, which would remove the need for reservations to the Protocol.

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

How can we fulfil this aim? We must, I think, discount the possibility that some new technological development in the field of defensive equipment will suddenly render chemical weapons a completely unattractive prospect to military planners. The thrust of technological development is in the direction of the continuous development of new weapons. Our business must be to devise political methods which are capable of technical implementation, which can control and turn back this process.

In this light our task is to work towards the creation of conditions in which no government will wish to manufacture or retain chemical weapons, or to keep open their option to do so. Hitherto the threat of retaliation in kind has served as a powerful constraint against the use of chemical weapons. If we are to propose an agreement for a comprehensive ban on the possession of chemical weapons, we must also propose some alternative means of assurance for nations against the possibility of an attack, prepared and mounted in secret violation of the agreement. If the agreement were not adequately verified, there would be just this possibility of clandestine production of large stocks of chemical weapons and their deployment. We cannot look with equanimity on such a prospect. An inadequately-verified convention might be highly destabilizing, especially in circumstances in which nuclear weapons were available to a Power which had abided by such an agreement and destroyed its own chemical weapons.

The most obvious means of ensuring the removal of chemical weapons from the arsenals of States would be an appropriately-verified prescription on which all parties could place full reliance: in other words, the effective measures for prohibiting chemical weapons that we all undertook to negotiate in good faith in Article IX of the BW Convention.

The basis of my delegation's approach to this problem is that there must be, in any agreement which may be adopted, a strict proportion between the scope of the prohibitions and the means of verification. The verification measures must be adequate for the tasks which are required of them. This implies that both the scope of the prohibitions and the methods of verification must be accurately defined. There can be no doubt that the work programme which was tabled on 20 March by the representative of

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

the United States (CCD/360) is a major contribution in this respect to the work of the Committee. This paper realistically sets out a number of the urgent and practical considerations to which the Committee must address itself and to which it must find answers before it can make any real, as opposed to illusory, progress on the road to chemical disarmament or arms control.

We have also had laid before us by the representative of the Soviet Union, a proposal for a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons which appears to be modelled exactly on the BW Convention (CCD/361). While this may help to concentrate the attention of the Committee on the question of chemical weapons, it brings us no nearer to a solution of the many problems, well known to the Committee, which the subject poses. It is, of course, a fact that this Committee decided just over one year ago, after due deliberation, to reject the thesis that it was possible to apply identical provisions to the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. We are now asked to go back on that decision. We are therefore obliged to look again at the considerations which prompted us to form the opinion that CW must be treated differently from BW in certain vital respects.

In the first place, before undertaking any agreement to ban chemical agents or weapons one must know what substances one is seeking to ban. They must be defined carefully and precisely, taking due account of the need to include agents as well as weapons, and making clear that we are talking about chemical weapons and not the chemicals used for conventional munitions, e.g. gunpowder, or aeroplane, motor or rocket fuel. A simple reference to "types and quantities", which sufficed in the case of biological weapons, will not do here. The United States delegation, in the valuable paper to which I have referred (CCD/360), quite rightly elaborates at some length the problems of definition with which we are faced. We cannot avoid those questions. In short, to suggest that in the case of chemical weapons all that is required is a political decision to prohibit production and deployment of all types of chemical agents and weapons is to fly in the face of obvious facts about chemicals.

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

We also find that the Soviet draft contains no provision whatsoever for verification. I have already referred, in my observations on the risks of escalated response, to what must be the strongest reason for thinking that any ban on possession of chemical weapons must be adequately verified. And during previous sessions many papers and statements on the subject of CW verification have been put forward in this Committee. It was in the light of these that the non-aligned working paper CCD/352 referred to a requirement for verification of the elimination of chemical weapons comprising a mixture of national and international means. Soviet acceptance of this requirement was acknowledged by the Soviet vote in favour of United Nations General Assembly resolution 2827 (XXVI), which requested the Committee to take into account this point of view. The draft in document CCD/361, however, appears to ignore this point altogether. It was always a central point of the British thesis, which came to be accepted by the Committee and subsequently by the United Nations, that, because of the special nature of biological weapons and the current stage of their development and deployment, it was possible to conclude an agreement immediately banning their production and stockpiling without any verification. It was possible in the unique case of biological weapons to rely upon a complaints procedure to deter any would-be violators. Let us be quite clear: a complaints procedure is not verification, nor is provision for consultation between States. My delegation entirely agrees with the remark made by the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, on 14 March, when she said:

"Above all, we do not regard the control clause in the B-Convention as a suitable precedent. The task now faced by our Committee is to establish a more satisfactory formula for the whole control and complaint system of a C-Convention."  
(CCD/PV/549, page 11).

As long ago as 18 August 1970 the British delegation, in working paper CCD/308, suggested that verification of a CW agreement covering the production, testing, and stockpiling, as well as use, of chemical weapons would need to be extremely reliable before the risk of entering into such an agreement could be reduced to an acceptable level. I am not aware that the Committee contradicts this view. We suggested that to ensure compliance with any chemical-weapons agreement one might need to verify, to an acceptable level of risk, all or any of the following:



(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

- (a) that existing weapons or their component parts have been destroyed and/or that no such weapons or component parts are held;
- (b) the absence (or cessation) of production of chemical weapon agents at declared facilities;
- (c) the absence of any undeclared production, testing and storage facilities.

Neither the working paper CCD/361 nor the statements made introducing it have given any indication as to how these requirements can be met. It is, however, essential to verify that banned activities are not being carried out, and that specified procedures are being followed. I see not the remotest acknowledgement of this in document CCD/361. The provision of machinery for complaints of violation might have a deterrent effect, but it could not conceivably give the level of continuing assurance which we should require in a ban on chemical weapons which would oblige States to deprive themselves of the ability to retaliate in kind.

May I interject here the thought that this is a point of particular significance for what I may perhaps be allowed to call medium and smaller Powers? If chemical weapons were used, in violation of a treaty, against a super-Power which had conscientiously divested itself of the weapon, that super-Power would still have a vast spectrum of other weapons available for retaliatory purposes. Not so a medium or smaller Power, whose interest in adequate verification that there had been no contravention would thus be the greater.

I wish to make one further point with regard to verification in relation to the Soviet draft. It has been suggested by the representative of Poland (CCD/PV.551, page 28), that a demand for adequate verification measures is equivalent to a request for espionage facilities. It should be possible to devise safeguards for any international system of control which would minimize the risk of abuse. But there is a point here which the Committee has got to face: the absence of verification could afford opportunities to cheat. In the context of chemical weapons, the Committee has to consider which of these two -- the danger in some minds of adequate verification, or the possibility of cheating -- poses the greater threat to mankind.

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

My conclusion is that the Soviet draft ignores much work which has been done previously and the common ground, however limited, which has been so laboriously gained by our extensive deliberations to date on chemical weapons. I question the value of submitting a proposal in treaty form which the co-sponsors must know is not acceptable to an important number of members of the Committee, not only members of the Western Group. Without political will we can make no progress. But the amount of progress which we can make in these negotiations will depend upon the extent to which we can agree on effective verification measures for any ban which may be proposed. The Committee has in the past recognized that without adequate verification there can be no ban. It is accordingly disappointing to hear proposals which contain no verification elements. We must, I am afraid, conclude that those who make such proposals wish to imply that, as no verification is possible, no ban is possible.

The concept of adequate verification measures, proportional to the scope of the agreement which they must control, gives a standard against which all proposals regarding chemical weapons must be measured. But we must remember that with regard to chemical weapons we are faced with a great variety of problems. On the one hand we have the requirements of those who have thought it necessary to equip themselves with a retaliatory chemical capability. But we have also to consider the security needs of those who have so far refrained from acquiring chemical weapons and who must be assured that they can afford to continue with their policy of restraint. In this context we do well to note that a chemical-weapons potential is not the monopoly of a few Powers but widely available to nearly all industrialized States. What is more, we also do well to remember that chemical weapons have been defined, not without justice, as "the poor man's weapons of mass destruction." It certainly would not be beyond the effort of developing countries, including some of those represented here, some of whom tend to regard this whole discussion as one concerning only the developed countries, to produce, if not very sophisticated, at least very unpleasant weapons. The basic materials for weapons are widely available and their likely use varies greatly from area to area.

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

I should also like to recall what was said by Lord Lothian in his opening statement this session (CCD/PV.546) about the important differences which exist between types of societies which make up the world community, and the significance of these differences for arms-control negotiations. So far as chemical weapons are concerned, the relevant differences are not only social, political, and ideological, they are also technological and industrial. They relate not only to the capacity to produce chemical weapons, but also to the ability to contribute to and to benefit from various methods of verification. These differences might make more difficult the verification of a single comprehensive ban. Equally, however, they might make different methods available for different areas. For example, a system of verification involving satellite observation, which if technically possible might be of use to the super-Powers, would be unlikely to provide assurance to the vast majority of States in zones such as Africa or Latin America. On the other hand, in some areas the lack of large industrial complexes and large-scale production of chemicals with a weapons potential might provide greater prospects for a successful ban on the highly-sophisticated lethal chemicals. In this context one could argue either that a threat in such areas is equally great from less sophisticated chemicals, or that it is best to act now to ensure that the areas remain free of such weapons before it is too late.

One of the most awkward problems in arms-control negotiations is to find a balance between what one would ideally like to see agreed and what it is possible to verify effectively. In areas where societies are open and international tensions almost absent, it might be possible to achieve a single comprehensive ban on chemical weapons which would cover all the relevant phases of activity, from research and development to deployment in the battlefield. In other areas, however, the verification of the end stages of possession or deployment might be the hardest problem to solve. This problem can not be overlooked. Evasion of a ban on possession or deployment would leave a tremendous gap between an illegal possessor and someone who had truly renounced the weapons. I have already suggested what might be the ultimate consequence of such a breach of an agreement if it led on to the use of chemical weapons in war by one side only.

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

Another of the problems which has to be considered is how one might verify a prohibition of the elaborate, expensive and time-consuming process of production of certain chemical agents. The basic question must be what substances would parties to the agreement engage not to manufacture. The range of chemicals available throughout the world is very extensive; so too are the situations in which they could be used for weapons purposes, as well as the different verification requirements which might be necessary. Certain substances might be easier to ban than others. For example, there are those whose use is exclusively military. Of course the value of confining the prohibition to these substances in the first instance would be limited. There would still be a considerable number of chemical options open to an aggressor. But I think that whatever advance we are able to make will be an improvement on the present situation, so long as all our measures are adequately verified. The important thing must be not to be discouraged if we find we cannot immediately make as much progress as we would like to in the Committee.

At this point I would like to comment on an observation by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Bulgaria at our last meeting. If I understood him correctly, the burden of his statement was that we must decide what we were going to do (that is, take a political decision), without any technical basis for believing that we could do it. Only then should we turn to technical experts, who would, I suppose, tell us whether or not we had been wasting our time. The British point of view is rather different. It is that we should take a decision -- political if you will -- about what we should like to do. This we could already be said to have taken in Article IX of the BW Convention. We should then refer to technical experts to show us whether and how our desires were capable of fulfilment. If they were, we should subsequently negotiate the political and technical framework in which they could be implemented.

In sharing its thinking with the Committee the British delegation has reached no decisions and is putting forward no proposal. In drawing attention to particular elements of the problem my delegation is not proposing that different time scales should

(Mr. Hainworth, United Kingdom)

be applied so as to take advantage of the opportunities before us. Such a matter would be for the Committee to decide. On 6 April the representative of Hungary reminded the Committee that -

"Without unflinching search for the possibilities of partial disarmament measures, without careful elaboration of details, and without the strenuous step-by-step method which is characteristic of our Committee, the very complex problems of general and complete disarmament cannot even be approached".

(CCD/FV.554, page 17).

The same applies to chemical weapons. As a method of proceeding, there is obvious advantage in isolating the easier problems and completing work on them first. This is not necessarily the same as proposing a series of agreements or protocols. The Committee might, however, prefer to work by this method, which has in the past appealed to my delegation. Certainly it is in all our interests to prevent the spread or development of even more chemical weapons around the world.

The next step in the British view will be for the Committee to go into some of the technical problems involved in the different areas of the chemical-weapons complex. My delegation will support its views later with a technical contribution and, if the Committee should decide to hold an informal meeting or meetings with experts present, as already advocated by the representative of Japan, the United Kingdom as on previous occasions will make an expert contribution. We should hope that all delegations would play a constructive part in any such meeting. But we need to have thought clearly about these issues in political terms before we summon experts. We do not wish to waste their time, nor will they wish to give us advice which we may subsequently find we are not prepared to use. For this reason my delegation firmly supports the proposal made on 13 April by the representatives of Sweden and Italy for an informal meeting of ourselves to elaborate the sort of technical questions which we need to put to technical experts in order to be able to make further progress.

The formulation of questions will require co-operation and hard work by members of the Committee. It will also require initial determination to see progress made. What is clear is that the Committee is in no position to reach final conclusions at this stage and that any simplistic suggestions that we should do so can only set back the prospects for success.

The CHAIRMAN (Brazil): A month ago the passage of the tenth anniversary of our Committee was observed. Quite properly, it was a rather sober celebration, for it was clear to all that progress towards the goal of disarmament during the first decade of the existence of the Committee fell rather short of the expectations of the seventeen representatives who for the first time gathered around this table on 14 March 1962. Suffice it to say that peace, security and disarmament appear to be at least as remote and unattainable today, at the beginning of the second decade of discussions and negotiations, as ten years ago.

There have been recently, however, signs of some favourable perspectives for certain efforts in the field of disarmament.

In this connexion we have been following with considerable interest the information available on the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) between the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. There is, of course, no doubt that the very fact that the two major contestants in the arms race are diligently attempting to reach some sort of basic agreement on the limitation of the most deadly and menacing category of weapons is a welcome indication of at least some degree of lessening of international tensions. We are told that prospects for progress in the near future are good. Unfortunately, the information available would lead us to believe that the negotiations are about to produce results of a merely quantitative nature, that is, a freezing of the numbers of certain types of weapons at a high level of overkill. This would, in fact, constitute a notable step towards the rational and economic management of the military budgets and of the power of destruction of these two countries. But it is believed that such an agreement would in no manner limit the unimpeded qualitative development of the nuclear arsenals of these countries, and might actually serve as a stimulus for a new phase of qualitative competition. We hope that we are not well informed, and that the SALT conversations will soon lead to truly meaningful results which will not only be a symptom of detente, but which will in fact act as a starting-point for the process of cessation and reversal of the nuclear arms race.

For all the importance that we might attach to these bilateral negotiations, we should never forget that this Committee must persist in its so far unfruitful attempts to promote nuclear disarmament. Lack of success must not lead us to set aside this basic objective, to drift farther and farther from it until we have completely

(The Chairman, Brazil)

abandoned this task to which the international community attributes the highest priority. We have been dealing much too lightly with this matter in which the security of all nations is at stake.

I can think of nothing that would contribute more effectively to re-establish the credibility of our efforts and to attract all nuclear Powers to these multilateral negotiations than a commitment by this Conference to seriously tackle the question of the cessation and reversal of the nuclear arms race and of nuclear disarmament.

For this reason, I fail to see how changes of a merely methodological or procedural nature, worthy though they may be, could be considered of fundamental importance. What we really need is a political decision to engage in effective negotiations on the matters to which highest priority has been attributed: nuclear disarmament and the final goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control that might be the real enticement for outsiders. Discussions on the improvement of the structure and the methods of work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should not distract us from this basic fact.

The Committee bears improving, of course, although I believe we all agree that even in its present form it constitutes a suitable institutional framework for productive discussions and negotiations on disarmament and on subjects related to disarmament. The records of its achievements during the first decade of its existence may not be something to be inordinately proud of; but the fact is that this not so brilliant record cannot honestly be blamed entirely -- or maybe even in substantial part -- on unsatisfactory procedural arrangements. Our subject matter -- disarmament -- cannot be dealt with properly through mechanical, efficiency-oriented procedures which may produce nothing more than a false impression of progress. The achievement of meaningful progress towards disarmament presupposes, besides the political preconditions, the existence of a negotiating body of stable, well-balanced and reasonably limited composition, whose working procedures are sufficiently flexible to facilitate the reaching of consensus through knowledgable endeavours both on the formal and on the informal levels of discussion and consultation.

(The Chairman, Brazil)

In fact, if this Committee were actively engaged in the process of negotiating priority measures of disarmament with some prospect of success, I am sure we would all be ready to overlook some of its indeed few structural and procedural deficiencies, such as the anomalous institution of the Co-Chairmanship. As it is, it is only natural that members of the Committee -- and other countries -- turn a critical eye towards such peculiarities. And I am quite ready to agree that we can do without the Co-Chairmanship, an institution linked with a number of anachronistic concepts and that seems rather queer in today's prevailing mood in international organizations.

With the discontinuance of the practice of the Co-Chairmanship, it would be necessary to envisage an alternative system. The election of an annual Chairman -- preferably from among the representatives of the Group of Twelve -- would appear to be indicated. The annual Chairman would be entrusted with the tasks that demand continuity, such as the co-ordination of consultations on organizational and methodological matters. He would also be responsible for the drafting of the annual report, subject to the modifications and the final approval of the Committee. The present system of alphabetical rotation of the chairmanship of each particular meeting would not be changed. If the idea of an annual Chairman were to be adopted, we should also envisage the designation of a representative of each of the two other groups of members who, in the capacity of Vice-Chairmen -- or we might just call them "friends of the Chairman" -- would maintain close contact with him and facilitate his tasks of consultation and co-ordination. This should not preclude the Committee from admitting, if the need so arises, that the Chairman may widen his circle of friends. That is a strictly tentative and preliminary suggestion.

I do not think there is need for any hard and fast decision on other procedural matters, for the flexibility of our present methods of work allows for the adoption of ad hoc procedural solutions for specific problems as appropriate. This applies, for example, to the question of the creation of working groups which has been mentioned by a few speakers. The establishment of such ad hoc subsidiary bodies is a matter that can be decided on by the Committee in each specific case.



(The Chairman, Brazil)

Turning now to the substantive part of our probable programme of work for 1972, I would like in the first place to refer to the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. A first concrete step towards the comprehensive prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons (CBW) was taken on the tenth of this month, when the Convention on bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons was open for signature. Brazil signed the Convention on this occasion, a gesture that should be understood not only as an indication of our willingness to support all equitable measures in the field of disarmament, but also as a sign of our commitment to participate actively in further negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the elimination of such weapons from the arsenals of all States, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention and of General Assembly resolutions 2826 and 2827 A (XXVI).

I need not reiterate here the general position of the Brazilian delegation on the question of chemical weapons, for our views are well known, having been presented here and in the General Assembly a number of times. In this connexion it might be useful to make special mention of the Joint Memorandum of the Group of Twelve presented to the Committee at the end of our 1972 session (CCD/352). The elements contained in that document could profitably be used as the working basis for our deliberations on this subject during the present session, so that early agreement could be reached on the prohibition and effective elimination of chemical agents of warfare. We are now carefully considering documents CCD/360, submitted by the United States delegation, and CCD/361, presented by seven socialist countries. We hope that differences of approach may be narrowed and that in due time we may have one or two texts, perhaps further refined, that would facilitate our proceedings.

The Brazilian delegation favours the negotiation of a complete prohibition of chemical weapons as the next and final step of our consideration of CBW weapons. We have, however, always been ready in this field to seize opportunities for gradual progress, if this does not impair the possibilities of a comprehensive ban in the near future. If it became apparent in the course of our negotiations that the only

(The Chairman, Brazil)

possible next step were the disposal, without further delay, of the most lethal category of chemical agents of warfare, the so-called "super-toxic" weapons that have no use for peaceful purposes, we would not disregard such an opportunity. Needless to say, if such a decision were to be taken by the Committee, there would have to be a clear commitment that our final goal would continue to be the comprehensive prohibition of all chemical weapons.

The question of verification and control of a prohibition of chemical weapons is indeed more complex than was the case with the prohibition of biological means of warfare. Efforts towards the detailed examination of certain technical aspects involved should be continued, although not at the cost of delaying unnecessarily the conclusion of agreements on this matter.

In this task, we should bear in mind the basic approach to the issue of verification originally submitted by the Group of Twelve in document CCD/310 and later incorporated in resolutions of the General Assembly and reiterated in the Group of Twelve Memorandum on chemical weapons of 28 September 1971 (CCD/352):

"Verification should be based on a combination of appropriate national and international measures, which would complement and supplement each other, thereby providing an acceptable system that would ensure effective implementation of the prohibition."

The system of verification for chemical weapons need not be airtight; it should encompass reasonable guarantees and safeguards so as to ensure confidence in the implementation of any agreement in this field. Any disarmament agreement must inevitably entail at least some risk of its violation. Procedures of verification and control can never be perfect, and parties to such an agreement must always rely to a considerable degree on factors not directly related to the provisions of the legal instrument itself, factors such as the existence of a political climate of confidence, or the nature of the risks involved in any violation of the agreement.

(The Chairman, Brazil)

This is not the first time we have to deal with a situation in which the same substance or product can be used both for peaceful and for military purposes. We understand it to be a principle of general applicability in all disarmament agreements that the goal of prohibiting military use should in no manner serve as a pretext for the establishment of restrictions on peaceful uses and on research and development for peaceful purposes. The determination of the military character of these substances or products is normally difficult and can, in fact, only be based on objective indications of intention and on technical elements which may only be detectable in the final stages of the process of production of the weapons. As a matter of fact, it might be said that any country that possesses a reasonably developed chemical industry has the possibility of preparing an arsenal of chemical weapons. Whatever the controls, there is always a residual risk we have to take if we are to achieve an agreement on the prohibition of these weapons. The case of biological weapons is similar in many respects, although there is an added element of security in the fact that certain unresolved difficulties related to the actual employment of biological weapons would appear to act as strong deterrents against their use. I also believe, to give another example, that there is a considerable degree of coincidence between the general problems of verification of a chemical-weapons prohibition and an eventual prohibition of nuclear weapons. And the difficulty lies in the same fact: that all peaceful uses, without exception, should be permitted, and all diversion for military weapons as such forbidden.

One last word about chemical weapons. I would like to state that it is the understanding of the Brazilian delegation that any agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons that may hopefully result from the deliberations of this Committee will include appropriate provisions on the channelling to the economic and social development of developing countries of a substantial portion of the savings derived from such an agreement. Enough has been said on this subject both here and at the General Assembly to make it unnecessary for me to elaborate further at this stage.

The interest of my delegation for the subject of chemical weapons is based primarily on an evaluation of the possibilities for meaningful progress in the different fields of disarmament and should in no way be interpreted as a diminution of our interest for measures related to nuclear disarmament, to which, as I said earlier in my statement, we continue to attach the highest priority. Sadly, this priority has yet to be translated into earnest discussions and negotiations in the Committee on the central problems of nuclear disarmament.

(The Chairman, Brazil)

As we succeeded in prohibiting the use, the development, the production and the stockpiling of biological weapons, and as we will succeed -- I hope -- in doing the same with chemical weapons, should we not at least attempt to dispose of nuclear weapons, that constitute an immensely greater threat for the security of all nations? The answer, perhaps, lies in the question itself. Is it precisely because nuclear weapons constitute such an immeasurably greater threat that we are unable to negotiate their elimination?

Only one particular aspect of the whole range of questions related to nuclear weapons, namely the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests, seems to attract the attention of this Committee.

In the course of our detailed political and technical examination of the subject, some have come to suspect that there may no longer be, after all, any important strategic reasons for the continuance of such tests by nuclear weapon Powers. Accordingly it is felt we may not be too far from the moment when heretofore insoluble deadlocks on the issue of verification will be superseded by the announcement of a political decision to forego underground weapon testing and to promote the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban (CTB). I am not sure if in that case we will be able to agree with those who even then would consider that the CTB "would be a major step towards halting what has been called 'vertical proliferation'; that is, the further sophistication and deployment of nuclear weapons".

Nevertheless, the Brazilian delegation believes that the exercise, though fundamentally less significant today than in the first years of this Committee, is still justified. We are quite ready to collaborate fully with efforts to achieve an equitable solution to the question of the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests which would complement the partial test ban Treaty of 1963 without prejudice to the right of all States to carry out their own unrestricted research and to develop their capabilities for all peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian). Today we should like to deal with certain matters relating to the problem of nuclear disarmament. The Soviet Union considers that the nuclear arms race holds the most serious threat to peace, and so it invariably advocates a solution in priority to the

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problem of nuclear disarmament. Our position on these questions was expressed in the documents of the twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union : the USSR favours the nuclear disarmament of all countries possessing such weapons. A practical step intended to convert this principle into reality is the Soviet Union's proposal for convening a conference of the five Powers possessing nuclear weapons. The declaration of the USSR Government on this matter said that the agreement to be reached as a result of the negotiations may cover "a broad spectrum of measures for nuclear disarmament or individual measures which would gradually lead to that end".

The problem of nuclear disarmament also receives a great deal of attention in the Soviet Union's proposal for convening a world disarmament conference. The letter addressed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 6 September 1971 said:

"... inasmuch as the nuclear armaments race arouses the greatest anxiety among peoples, primary attention could be devoted to the questions of prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons, if the majority of the participants in the conference should so desire." (A/8491)

We appreciate that the problems of nuclear disarmament have occupied an important place at the current session of the Committee on Disarmament. Various aspects of this problem have been referred to in the statements of many Committee members, and the need for measures to end the nuclear arms race has been stressed.

One of the problems actively discussed by the Committee on Disarmament concerns the banning of underground nuclear tests. The discussion in the Committee confirms the importance attached by many delegations to the early prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests, including underground-tests. The need for the complete prohibition of such tests has been affirmed by the delegations of Poland, Mongolia, India, Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Japan, Canada, Italy and other countries.

The Soviet side shares the concern of many States at the continuing nuclear weapons tests. The Soviet Union's position is based on recognition of the need to end all such tests, including underground tests, everywhere. The Soviet Union was among the States supporting General Assembly resolution 2828B (XXVI) (CCD/357), which urges "the nuclear Powers to reach an agreement without delay on the cessation of all nuclear and thermonuclear tests". The USSR favours a positive decision on this extremely important problem, which is now ripe for solution. The Soviet delegation has repeatedly declared that the Soviet Union is prepared to conclude an agreement for the

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cessation of underground nuclear weapons tests on the basis of national means of detection and identification. In this matter we proceed from the assumption that modern science and technology have reached a level of development where it is possible to verify with the aid of national means of detection and identification of underground nuclear explosions whether States are complying with the obligations they have undertaken to end underground nuclear explosions. In this connexion we would emphasize that the efficacy of national means of verification is becoming more and more widely recognized both among members of the Committee and outside it.

The ever-growing importance of seismic means of detection of underground nuclear explosions has been repeatedly emphasized by Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, in her statements to the Committee. At the current session she has again raised this question, stressing the vital importance of such means. She has said:

"The understanding of the techniques for seismological monitoring has advanced so far that one can now correctly identify a sufficiently large proportion of explosions, so as to obtain an effective deterrence against attempts at clandestine testing. The verification issue can no longer serve as an alibi for the refusal to stop testing". (CCD/PV.549, page 10)

The possibility of solving the question of the cessation of nuclear weapons tests on the basis of national means of detection was also referred to by Mr. Ignatieff, the Canadian representative, in his statement. He said:

"At present there would no doubt be a substantial probability of identifying, with the sophisticated national means of discrimination now available, any detected explosions in another country down to explosions of low to low-intermediate hardrock yields -- that is, those of real strategic significance."

(CCD/PV.546, page 9)

An analysis of the situation with regard to guarantees for the fulfilment by States of their obligations concerning the cessation of underground nuclear weapon tests inevitably leads to the conclusion that the efficacy of existing means of verification has increased sufficiently to provide a basis for an agreement on the prohibition of all such tests. What is therefore required above all now is an appropriate political decision. This aspect of the question was emphasized by Mr. Waldheim, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, when he spoke at the opening of the current spring session of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD/PV.545, page 9).

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In fact, the negotiations on underground nuclear weapons tests have thrown light on the basic aspects of this problem. To embark on more studies would merely further delay solution of the problem of prohibiting underground nuclear explosions. This is why we have doubts regarding the proposition of Mr. Martin, the United States representative that "more work needs to be done with regard to the still unresolved technical aspects necessary for effective and reliable verification". (CCD/PV.545, page 16)

The possibility of solving the problem of prohibition of nuclear weapons tests with the aid of national means of detection is recognized in the United States of America itself, although that country's official position still obstructs the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement on the cessation of such tests. Many United States scientists have advocated the conclusion of an agreement comprising the use of national means of monitoring; they have convincingly demonstrated that existing possibilities of detecting and identifying underground nuclear explosions provide a reliable guarantee that States will fulfil their obligations under such an agreement. Many of these scientists have held or are holding senior government posts and are therefore competent to judge why the United States refuses to agree to the prohibition of underground nuclear tests on the basis we propose.

In January 1972 a group of prominent United States scientists, such as Herbert York, Morton Halperin, Marvin Goldberger, Herbert Scoville, Franklin Long, George Kistkiakowsky, George Rathjens and Adrian Fisher, the former Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, published a statement saying that "The United States should now seek to negotiate a treaty banning all underground nuclear tests without requiring on-site inspection." (FAS Newsletter, vol. 24, No. 10, January 1972). This statement also says:

"Much of the opposition to the test ban treaty in the United States does not arise from fear of Soviet cheating. It springs from the desire to continue American nuclear testing in order to develop new weapons, to retest existing weapons and to keep our laboratories vigorous." (ibid.)

A little earlier, in July 1971, the Senate Subcommittee on Arms Control discussed the prospects of comprehensive agreement for the prohibition of nuclear tests. On the basis of this discussion, a report was prepared which says:

"Enormous advances have been made in seismology so that it is now possible, through seismic means alone, to identify underground explosions to a degree unknown five years ago ... These advances would seem to justify, indeed require, a reassessment of the United States position regarding on-site inspection."

(Prospects for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, Washington 1971, page 1)

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Another noteworthy opinion concerning the position of the United States on underground nuclear weapons tests was expressed in a letter sent on 14 July 1971 by the former United States representative at the Geneva negotiations, Mr. Wadsworth, to the United States Sub-Committee on Arms Control and published in the "Hearings before the Sub-Committee on Arms Control, International Law and Organization, July 22 and 23, 1971", pages 5-8. In that letter Mr. Wadsworth says that the question of "effective inspection" is merely a "smoke-screen" to justify the underground nuclear testing programme for military purposes.

Thus from numerous competent opinions and arguments we may deduce that the necessary basis now exists for the prohibition of underground nuclear weapons tests with the aid of national means of verification. What is missing, however, is a willingness of the United States of America to accept such a prohibition. By continuing to insist on compulsory on-site inspection to verify compliance with the agreement, the United States is blocking a solution of this important problem.

The USSR, in its desire to settle the problem of underground tests, expressed its willingness to take part in an international co-operative effort for the exchange of seismic data as an additional guarantee that States will observe an agreement for the prohibition of underground nuclear weapons tests. The Soviet side, in advocating such co-operation within the framework of an underground test ban agreement, has had in mind verification of compliance without any international inspection. Seismic data would be exchanged on a voluntary basis and would be evaluated not by an international body but by each State for itself. Even this step by the Soviet side, however, did not lead to a solution of the problem. The United States did not desire to put an end to underground tests and expressed no willingness to come to an agreement on the foregoing basis.

During the discussion of the problem of prohibiting nuclear weapons tests, the Canadian and Japanese delegations supported a partial or intermediate solution designed to limit, in the first instance, the magnitude and number of such tests by nuclear Powers. These delegations propose that in the first place "large-scale" nuclear weapons tests should be prohibited. Thus the Japanese representative proposed that a "threshold" of magnitude 5.75 should be established, above which such tests should be prohibited forthwith (CCD/PV.553, page 21 et seq.). This proposal is not new. It differs from similar proposals previously submitted to the Committee only by a higher "threshold" of



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magnitude. It is significant that this higher "threshold" was proposed at a time when, in the words of Mr. Nisibori, "the outstanding progress made in science and technology in the present-day world enables even small-scale underground nuclear tests to be detected and identified solely by this seismological means" (ibid., page 15). The Soviet delegation fully defined its position on the proposals for partial measures in a statement at the Committee's last session (CCD/PV.536, pages 8-20).

We understood the desire of countries to settle the problem of prohibiting nuclear weapons tests as soon as possible and therefore agreed at the time to the Egyptian proposal for the prohibition of underground tests above a "threshold" of magnitude 4.75 in conjunction with the declaration of a moratorium on tests below that "threshold". The Egyptian proposal might, in the view of the Soviet Union, serve as a basis for the solution of the problem of banning all underground nuclear weapons tests. But the partial measures now being proposed, which leave nuclear tests below the "threshold" of magnitude 5.75 outside the scope of the prohibition, would not contribute to a solution of the problem as a whole or remove the dangers inherent in the improvement of nuclear weapons. Moreover, the establishment of a "threshold" of magnitude would give rise to serious technical difficulties of determination of the magnitude of explosions within the range of the established "threshold". Endless disputes and conflicts between States would be caused by the question whether a particular explosion was covered by the prohibition or not. For all these reasons an agreement on a partial prohibition of underground tests would not only fail to promote better understanding among States but might, on the contrary, lead to a deterioration of the international climate.

On that question the Soviet delegation shares the views expressed by Mr. Banerjee, the Indian representative, who had this to say on "partial measures" for the prohibition of underground nuclear weapons tests:

"Suggestions for the so-called measures of restraint are only superficially attractive. They could only create an illusion of progress and would result in a legitimization of certain categories of nuclear-weapon testing. A partial approach would be inadequate, unworkable and dangerous. There should be a truly comprehensive approach to the question of a comprehensive test ban".

(CCD/PV.552, page 9).

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This opinion is shared by other delegations to the Committee. Thus Mr. Khattabi, the representative of Morocco, said on 11 April:

"..... any partial agreement based on a gradual reduction in underground testing or on what is called the "threshold method" is bound to entail further military, technical and political complications and thus help to delay unnecessarily the final solution of this problem". (CCD/PV.555, p.15)

The Soviet Union's approach to the partial prohibition of underground nuclear explosions coincides with the views expressed by the representative of India and several other delegations in the Committee on Disarmament. The Soviet side considers that compliance with obligations regarding the complete prohibition of underground nuclear tests can be reliably verified with the aid of national monitoring means, if the parties concerned are prepared to adopt an appropriate political decision. We cannot accept the ideas proposed to us for the purpose of filling the vacuum created by the unwillingness of certain Powers to take a political decision for the cessation of nuclear weapons tests.

The problem of the prohibition of underground nuclear weapons tests is an essential part of the Soviet nuclear-disarmament programme. Its solution would have a restraining effect on the development of nuclear arsenals among the nuclear Powers parties to an agreement. The process was started by the Moscow Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests in three media, a Treaty that undoubtedly served the purposes for which it was concluded. This instrument is one of the first outstanding international acts of the post-war era directed towards the problem of the prohibition of nuclear weapons. If the prohibition imposed on nuclear tests in the three media by the Treaty did not exist, the production of nuclear weapons would be greatly expanded and accelerated. This extremely important fact must on no account be disregarded in any evaluation of the Moscow Treaty. Another of the Treaty's invaluable features is that it does much to prevent contamination and pollution of the air, the seas, the oceans and outer space by radio-active substances. What is more, the significance of the Moscow Treaty is that it has promoted further negotiations on disarmament.

This is why the Soviet delegation cannot agree with Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, when she says that the Moscow Treaty "has turned out to function only as a public health measure" and that "its effectiveness to hamper development of nuclear

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weapons, or even to reduce nuclear-weapon testing, is evidently nil" (CCD/PV.549, p.7). Such a negative evaluation of the Moscow Treaty may in our view merely serve as an excuse for the opponents of the Treaty who do not wish to accede to it.

In our statement today we have touched upon this question because the proper evaluation of international disarmament agreements is of great importance for the prospects of this Committee's work and for the efforts of States for disarmament. A biased evaluation of the Committee's work on disarmament will hardly contribute to the further success of activities in this direction. If we concluded that during the past ten years nothing had been done in this field, then the question would, of course, arise what point there is in continuing this activity, which according to some delegations has so far not yielded any positive results, and what point there is in the work of the Committee on Disarmament if its achievements over the past ten years can be regarded as nil.

We have no wish to exaggerate the importance of the international agreements prepared and approved in the Committee on Disarmament. It would, however, not be right to belittle in every possible way the disarmament treaties agreed upon and concluded and even treat them as worthless. With all its shortcomings and weaknesses, the work of the Committee on Disarmament makes a positive contribution to the development of international co-operation among States for the purpose of strengthening peace and the security of peoples. This work must, in the view of the Soviet side, be pursued and further intensified in order that the results of the efforts of States for disarmament may be more substantial and more conducive to broad practical measures of disarmament.

Among other measures likely to lead to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons from the arsenals of States, an important place should be assigned to proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, the elimination of military bases, including nuclear bases, in foreign territory, and prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union urges persistently that these proposals should be put into effect. The Soviet side has initiated proposals designed to preclude the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons and to outlaw them.

The USSR attaches great importance to the Treaty which prohibited the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction, including above all nuclear weapons, on the seabed. We also deem it essential that efforts should continue to find ways and means of solving the problem of the complete demilitarization of the seabed, in order to prevent an arms race in that medium.

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In conclusion we would point out that the Soviet delegation is prepared, together with the delegations of other countries, to seek mutually-acceptable solutions designed to achieve the nuclear disarmament of States.

The CHAIRMAN (Brazil): I would like to read the following statement on behalf of the Co-Chairmen:

The delegations of Italy and Sweden have requested that an informal meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament be convened on Tuesday, 25 April 1972, regarding the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. If agreeable to other members of the Committee, this informal meeting would be held immediately following the conclusion of our formal meeting on that date.

It is adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.