

CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

CCD/PV.760
9 August 1977
ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND SIXTIETH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 9 August 1977, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. S. M. Rahnali

(Morocco)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Argentina: Mr. T.M.V. OTEGUI

Brazil: Mr. I. MASTROGIOVANNI

Bulgaria: Mr. R. NIKOLOV
Mr. G. GAVRILOV
Mr. V. KOLAROV

Burma: U THA TUN

Canada: Mr. R. HARRY JAY
Mr. J. T. SIMARD

Czechoslovakia: Mr. E. ZAPOTOCKÝ
Mr. V. TYLNER
Mr. J. FRANEK

Egypt: Mr. F. EL IBRASHI
Mr. A. ABOU' KHEIR
Mr. A. MANSOUR
Mr. M. OMAR

Ethiopia:

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HERDER
Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI
Mr. F. SAYATZ
Mr. F. JUNG

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. G.J. SCHLAICH
Mr. J. PÖHLMANN
Mr. K. HANNESCHLÄGER
Mr. H. FEIGEL

Hungary:

Mr. M. DOMOKOS
 Mr. R. TOTH
 Mr. I. KÖRMENDY
 Mr. G. SZENTESI

India:

Mr. C. R. GHAREKHAN
 Mr. S. T. DEVARE
 Mr. B. BALAKRISHNAN

Iran:

Mr. M. FARTASH
 Mr. H. AMERI
 Miss C. TAHMASSEB
 Mr. D. CHILATY

Italy:

Mr. N. DI BERNARDO
 Mr. M. MORENO
 Mr. C. FRATESCHI
 Mr. G. VALDEVIT

Japan:

Mr. M. OGISO
 Mr. T. SAWAI
 Mr. Y. NAKAMURA

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES
 Mr. M. MARÍN
 Miss A. CABRERA

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
 Mr. Z. ERENDO

Morocco:

Mr. S. M. RAHHALI

Netherlands:

Mr. C. A. VAN DER KLAUW
 Mr. A. J. MEERBURG

Nigeria: Mr. S. T. ADAMU

Pakistan: Mr. K. SALEEM

Peru: Mr. L. CHÁVEZ-GODOY
Mr. G. CHAUNY

Poland: Mr. E. WYZNER
Mr. A. OLSZOWKA
Mr. T. FIECKO
Mr. A. CZERKAWSKI
Mr. H. PAC

Romania: Mr. O. IONESCU
Mr. G. TINCA

Sweden: Mr. G. HAMILTON
Mr. L. NORBERG
Mr. U. REINIUS
Mr. A. ÅNGSTRÖM
Mr. J. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics Mr. V. I. LIKHATCHEV
Mr. B. P. KRASSULIN
Mr. A. V. FOKIN
Mr. N. V. PESTEREV
Mr. I. S. CHTCHERBAKOV
Mr. Y. V. KOSTENKO
Mr. B. T. SOURIKOV

United Kingdom: Mr. D. R. ASHE
Mr. J. G. TAYLOR
Mr. R. DEAN
Mr. I. R. KENYON

United States of America:

Mr. A. S. FISHER

Mr. A. R. TURRENTINE

Mr. R. W. BUCHHEIM

Mr. R. FRITZEL

Mr. N. WALDROP

Mr. W. HECKROTTE

Mr. J. SHERRY

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. LUKABU-K'HABOUJI

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. Risto HYVÄRINEN

Alternate Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. A. CORRADINI

Communiqué of the meeting

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 760th meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of Mr. Sidi Mohamed Rahhali, representative of Morocco.

H. E. Ambassador R. Harry Jay, head of the Canadian delegation, made a statement in which he expressed regret that the CCD was not in a position to enter into substantive negotiations at its summer session on a CTB treaty or a CW agreement. He hoped that the bilateral consultations between the Soviet Union and the United States on chemical weapons and the tripartite talks between the United States, the USSR and the United Kingdom on a nuclear test ban would soon reach a fruitful conclusion and thus enable the CCD to elaborate multilateral agreements in those fields.

He reaffirmed Canada's position on the complete cessation of nuclear testing, and was gratified that the USSR had modified its traditional position on verification, and added that Canada agreed with the concept of a joint consultative committee proposed in the Swedish draft treaty. Canada continued to believe that nuclear explosions for so-called peaceful purposes should be prohibited by a CTB treaty until effective means had been devised to make absolutely sure that there would be no weapons-related benefits from that kind of explosion. With regard to the question of the accession of all the nuclear-weapon Powers to a treaty of that nature, he hoped that they would do so as soon as possible and urged the Superpowers to be the first to offer a "good example" to the world.

On the question of the banning of chemical weapons, he recalled Canada's views as expressed in the Committee on 29 March 1977. The competent Canadian authorities were considering the comments evoked by the United Kingdom draft treaty, and were gratified that the United Kingdom had stated its willingness to modify the draft to meet the concern expressed about some of its features.

Canada, which had participated actively in the efforts made to ban existing weapons of mass destruction, agreed that new weapons of mass destruction should, if possible, be prohibited before they were developed. For the time being, however, the discussions in the CCD on the subject did not seem to indicate that new weapons of mass destruction were being developed on the basis of new principles of science. Moreover, the Canadian authorities were not convinced that an "umbrella" agreement would be of practical value since the banning of each type of weapon gave rise to its own set of problems. He concluded by supporting the United Kingdom suggestion for a United Nations resolution strongly condemning the development of new weapons

of mass destruction, coupled with a firm undertaking by all participating States to be vigilant in guarding against the development of such arms.

The representative of Italy (H.E. Ambassador Nicolo Di Bernardo) made a statement in which he expressed his Government's views on the main issues on the CCD's agenda.

He welcomed the signature at Geneva on 18 May of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques and the positive results achieved by the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, held at Geneva in June.

He also referred to the special session of the General Assembly that was to be devoted to disarmament, and said that the Italian Government was confident that the session would offer a welcome opportunity to provide the international community with realistic guidelines in its endeavours in the field of disarmament.

While emphasizing the great importance attached by Italy to the role of the CCD, Ambassador Di Bernardo expressed disappointment at the CCD's very modest achievements on the priority issues of a comprehensive test ban and a CW convention.

He stressed that the time had come to renew the concerted efforts made to solve the problems standing in the way of final agreement on those two questions.

On the question of a CW convention, he regretted that the Italian proposal to set up a working group had failed to materialize, and was of the opinion that a group of that kind could have made a valuable contribution to the solution of the major questions involved, thereby silencing the mounting criticism of the CCD's ability to perform its negotiating functions.

In that respect he hoped that no effort would be spared to give the CCD another chance before the end of the year.

He also discussed the problem of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, stressing the need to tackle the question in the light of the 1948 United Nations resolution and without diverting attention from the priority issues on the CCD's agenda.

Lastly, he drew the CCD's attention to the question of conventional weapons and to the proposal made by Mr. Forlani, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and recently submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, that a Committee should be established to maintain conventional weaponry at the lowest possible level.

The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (H.E. Ambassador V. I. Likhatchev) devoted his statement to the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. He emphasized that that Soviet initiative was gaining increasingly wide international recognition, and noted that the constructive ideas and considerations advanced in the course of its examination by the representatives of a number of States members of the Committee had now made it possible to move closer towards the adoption of certain basic provisions of a draft agreement on a generally acceptable basis.

He submitted to the Committee for consideration a revised supplemented text of the draft agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. He explained that the draft included a definition of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction drawn up in the light of the ideas expressed by the members of the Committee and of the 1948 formulation of the United Nations Commission for Conventional Armaments. The supplemented draft also provided for the possibility, parallel to a general agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction, of concluding special agreements prohibiting specific types of those weapons, which brought it closer to the position upheld by some of the members of the Committee. An important part of the new Soviet proposal was the inclusion of a reference to the fact that a specific list of the types of armaments to be prohibited would be annexed to the agreement. By way of example, he gave a list of the types to be prohibited together with the necessary explanations.

The representative of the USSR emphasized that the proposed solution would make it possible not only to achieve the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction in the potentially dangerous areas that had already been identified but also, in principle, to bar the way to the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction in future.

The representative of Sweden (H.E. Ambassador Gustaf Hamilton) introduced the fourth progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and to Identify Seismic Events.

He proposed that the decisions on the adoption of the fourth progress report of the Ad Hoc Group and the date of its next meeting should be taken at the next official meeting of the CCD on Thursday, 11 August 1977.

The delegation of Japan submitted a "Working paper on Focal Depth Resolvability of a Multi-Array Stations System" (CCD/540).

The delegation of the USSR submitted a "Draft agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons" (CCD/511/Rev.1).

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 11 August 1977, at 10.30 a.m.

Mr. HARRY JAY (Canada): This is the first time that I have intervened formally at this summer session, and I would like first of all to add my voice to the warm welcome the new United States representative, Ambassador Fisher, has justly received on this, his second incarnation in Geneva disarmament activities. I am convinced that his great experience and wide knowledge in the field of disarmament and arms control will contribute greatly to the success of our work, not the least when we come to the overdue renewed phase of purposeful negotiation on our main priorities.

With those priorities very much in mind, Mr. Chairman, I recall with some sadness what was underlined by the distinguished representative of Yugoslavia, Ambassador Lalović, on 28 July 1977, that the CCD seems at this juncture to be marking time with respect to its main work. It is now clear that no substantive negotiation on a CTB treaty or on a CW agreement will take place in the CCD as a whole this summer. With my friend from Yugoslavia I note that we are in some danger of "becoming an open forum for a freewheeling exchange of views". That would be especially regrettable if our exchanges failed to turn this period of pause into a useful contribution to the negotiation process when we are able to restart. Certainly none of us wants generalized formal statements to become the substance of what we have to offer to the very important objectives set for us in the disarmament and arms control field.

Canada, for its part, is anxious to see the CCD take up serious negotiations on a CTB and on CW with the least possible further delay. We have made these wishes very clear on many occasions over the years. I believe my predecessors have made a useful contribution to clearing the ground for these two most important sets of multilateral negotiations. We are, therefore, now watching anxiously for the first indications that the bilateral consultations on CW, between the USSR and the United States of America, and the trilateral consultations on CTB, involving the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom, will soon come to fruitful conclusions, enabling the CCD to set itself, with a renewed sense of urgency and purpose, to playing its indispensable part in the development of long-overdue multilateral agreements to ban nuclear tests and chemical weapons.

Canada's determined opposition to all nuclear testing is well known, but cannot be stated too often. We have always recognized that verification was among the principal difficulties obstructing the achievement of a CTB. Happily

(Mr. Harry Jay, Canada)

there has been encouraging progress in that regard in recent years. The United States and the USSR have successfully negotiated the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the related Agreement on peaceful nuclear explosions. The Group of Experts on seismological verification set up under the auspices of the CCD promises soon to present a report that may be of some assistance in solving some of the problems on our way to a CTB. The modification in the Soviet Union's traditional position on verification in the memorandum of Mr. Gromyko presented to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, and which has since been reflected in the updated Soviet draft CTBT, augurs well for the required compromise on this difficult question. Meanwhile, the problem of verification, especially as regards on-site inspection, can be further eased, in the view of my delegation, if the concept of the joint consultative committee advanced in the Swedish draft treaty can be accepted.

Another issue, central to the difficulties experienced in arriving at a comprehensive test ban, is the continuing grave concern that relates to the use of nuclear explosions for so-called peaceful purposes. Unless and until some effective means can be devised to make absolutely sure that there would be no weapons-related benefits from PNEs, no such explosions should be contemplated under a CTB treaty. That, too, is a very valid feature of the Swedish draft treaty.

All of us here well understand the difficulties that will remain so long as the CTB treaty fails to win the support of all nuclear-weapon States. Without minimizing those difficulties, Canada continues to believe that the two major nuclear Powers, having in mind the stage they have reached in the development and sophistication of their respective nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility to set the trend in the right direction. We look to them to be the first to offer a "good example" to the world. Of course Canada, as most countries, would much prefer that any CTB treaty should be strengthened by the earliest possible adherence of all nuclear-weapon Powers. But if the optimum cannot be realized from the outset, at least the preparation in the CCD of a credible arrangement, involving the loyal participation of the three nuclear Powers represented here, will be an impressive step towards wider multilateralism.

If I may make an aside here, Mr. Chairman, I would recall that many of us in the CCD, including the Canadian delegation, feel called upon from time to time to

(Mr. Harry Jay, Canada)

criticize the two Superpowers for shortcomings on their part. While I reserve my right to push them to a more vigorous pace on appropriate occasions I think it is only fair to observe with appreciation that they and the United Kingdom are, after all, here and working with us in a common effort to make as rapid progress as possible on many nuclear arms control issues of great importance to all countries. With their essential commitment and contribution I am confident the CCD can eventually produce a valuable CTB treaty. Part of its worth will, of course, reside in how persuasive it is to the nuclear-weapon States that do not participate in the work of the CCD. To that end we believe it should have an initial duration period that will be long enough to encourage those other nuclear Powers to recognize that their own interests and the cause of the world peace would be served by their early accession to a comprehensive test ban treaty.

On the second priority of our agenda, the negotiation of a CW agreement, I will not take the time of the CCD at this juncture to restate the views I recorded on 29 March, 1977. I would, however, confirm the firm Canadian position that bilateral discussions between the USSR and the United States should lead very soon to the point where the CCD will be able to take up this important subject in a more meaningful way than is now possible. In the interim, we are giving further thought to the helpful United Kingdom draft and the several thought provoking comments that it has stimulated. We are especially grateful to Lord Goronwy-Roberts for his statement of 28 July reaffirming the United Kingdom's willingness to consider alternative solutions to meet some of the concerns that have been expressed about one or another feature of the United Kingdom draft. When the multilateral negotiating process can begin action in earnest in this forum we will make every effort to participate in a constructive way.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, just a few words on the question that claims our special attention this week: the matter of new weapons of mass destruction. Canada's active participation in efforts to ban existing weapons of mass destruction are a matter of record stretching back over many years. The notion that the development and the production of new weapons of mass destruction could be inhibited before there was any whisper of risk that they might appear in the arsenals of any State, evokes a very deep and fundamental response in the hearts and minds of all peoples who yearn to limit the horror

(Mr. Harry Jay, Canada)

that may lie in wait for future generations. Certainly all of us wish that research and development during the past half century had not led to the danger of weapons of mass destruction of such magnitude as nuclear, chemical and biological technology. None of us would wish these terrible precedents to be followed by hitherto unthought-of new dangers to the survival of mankind. The resolution of 12 August 1948, which defined weapons of mass destruction, reflected this widely-shared and continuing concern. At the same time, as has been demonstrated by the thorough and lengthy discussions on the Soviet proposal, there is no justification for the belief that new weapons of mass destruction based on new applications or new principles of science threaten to appear in the foreseeable future, let alone in the near term. If the possibility of any such development were to become in any way a tangible prospect, we have in the CCD the means to give immediate international attention to the danger. There is, however, nothing in the record of our lengthy and broad consideration of the Soviet initiative, which suggests to the Canadian authorities that anything like "an umbrella" agreement could be of any practical value -- if indeed one could be worked up. Experience has taught us well the lesson that each type of weapon possesses its own special characteristics and gives rise to its own special set of problems, and not only with respect to verification. The requirement is always, therefore, to understand the precise problem and to devise a specific agreement, (a) to meet the particular need, and (b) to encourage the broadest possible international adherence.

Until something more tangible comes into view on which we can focus in a practical way, we would support the common sense approach suggested recently by the United Kingdom delegation, that we should seek "a firm condemnation by the world community of the development of new weapons of mass destruction, coupled with a request to this Conference to keep the matter under review".

A United Nations resolution of that kind could go beyond the mere expression of a generalized condemnation of the unknown, and embody a firm undertaking by all participating States to be vigilant in and outside the CCD against the possible development of new weapons of mass destruction. We would hope that the United Kingdom proposal will find broad support in the world community. If nothing else this might bring the welcome result that the fears that have been generated in respect of NWMD -- fears that are some times justified, but often not really warranted -- will be seen in a more reasonable perspective.

Mr. DI BERNARDO (Italy): Before turning to the substance of my speech, I should like to associate myself with previous speakers in welcoming Ambassador Adrian S. Fisher and to congratulate him on his appointment as the leader of the United States delegation and Co-Chairman of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

Ambassador Fisher's outstanding experience and competence in the field of disarmament are so well known that no reiteration is needed on my part.

My delegation wishes him every success in his high mission and looks forward to strict co-operation with him and the members of his delegation.

Mr. Chairman, since the last time I took the floor in our spring session, events have occurred which provide reasons for both gratification and concern.

Among the reasons for gratification I should like to mention the signature in Geneva, on 18 May, of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

Italy was among the first signatories of this Convention, which was patiently drafted in a constructive spirit of co-operation and compromise by our Committee. This was a significant achievement indeed of CCD negotiations. Encouraged by the number of States which have already signed the ENMOD Convention, my delegation looks forward to its prompt entry into force and to its fullest adherence.

Another dominant event of the last months which is worthwhile recalling is the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, held in Geneva between 20 June and 1 July.

It was gratifying to my delegation to be reassured that no violation of the Treaty had been reported in the period under review and to note that the treaty had satisfactorily achieved the primary purpose assigned to it.

As I underlined in my statement on that occasion, my country views the Sea-bed Treaty as "a significant stage on the way towards general and complete disarmament and a concrete contribution to the establishment of an international society based on security and progress for humanity".

Finally, Mr. Chairman, my delegation noticed with satisfaction the business-like atmosphere prevailing at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which led to the elaboration of a balanced and factual draft agenda.

(Mr. Di Bernardo, Italy)

The Italian Government supported the decision to convene the special session and was among the co-sponsors of the resolution 189/B adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 1976.

My Government is convinced that the special session will offer an important opportunity for a broad and in-depth review and appraisal of the numerous problems of a general nature facing us in the field of disarmament.

The adoption of a declaration of basic principles, having the support of the widest number of States, could in our opinion provide useful guidelines to the international community's endeavours in the field of disarmament.

My Government, for many years, has repeatedly stressed, both here and in other forums, the need for a comprehensive and coherent programme of action outlining the priorities and the main steps of a gradual disarmament process.

We note with pleasure that such an approach has found its place as a separate item of the draft agenda for the special session. The Italian Government is willing to study this issue with particular attention in order to make a genuine and constructive contribution to the fashioning of a programme of action on disarmament realistic in its aims and well-balanced in its components.

While appreciating these encouraging events, my delegation cannot ignore the threats and the uncertainties which continue to cast gloomy shadows over our expectations for peace and closest co-operation among nations.

Daily echoes of escalation in the arms race, of local and regional conflicts, of continued accumulation of stockpiles of terrible weapons, of increasing sophistication in methods and means of warfare are, for my Government and the Italian people, causes for wide and deeply-felt concern.

You, Mr. Chairman, as well as the other members of the CCD, are well aware of the great importance Italy attaches to the role of our Committee.

Our confidence in the CCD and its highly qualified experience has been repeatedly voiced.

The General Assembly of the United Nations, at its thirty-first session last year, entrusted our Committee with a number of specific priority tasks; we shall be called to report on the outcome of our deliberations in New York within a few weeks.

(Mr. Di Bernardo, Italy)

Furthermore, the special session on disarmament, scheduled for next spring, is expected to debate and to assess the adequacy and the effectiveness of the existing machinery for disarmament, which finds its main pillar in the CCD.

In this connexion, our present session is a challenging opportunity to reaffirm to the United Nations and to the international community, through concrete and consistent achievements, the vitality and the credibility of the Geneva Conference.

In approaching the resumption of our work at this summer session, my delegation cherished the hope of accomplishing meaningful and effective progress on at least one of the crucial items in our agenda. In our view it was and it remains essential for the Conference to give clear evidence of its leading capacity in disarmament negotiations, in order to prevent and to avert the temptation to seek elsewhere a body which already exists and has all the qualities to be a vital and productive one.

Unfortunately, looking back to these weeks of discussions, it is my impression that we are sinking once again into a long and frustrating general debate, to the detriment of our main task which is to negotiate measures of arms control and disarmament on issues of paramount importance.

No other question in the field of disarmament has been so carefully studied and debated as the question of a comprehensive test ban. The position of my Government on this high priority topic has been set out at length in this Committee. We believe that a large part of the technical and scientific aspects of the problem has been sufficiently explored. The Ad Hoc Seismic Group, in which Italian experts have taken an active part, has done good work and is approaching its conclusion. The opinion of my delegation is that the time has come to take the political decisions which stand in the way of reaching a final agreement.

Political decisions of course do not arise out of a vacuum. They should be based upon an acceptable and mutually satisfactory solution of the essential preconditions of a viable treaty. In this context the problem of verification deserves further study in order to find means and methods to assure compliance with the treaty combining the exchange of teleseismic data with on-site inspections whenever the former are not likely to provide adequate assurances.

(Mr. Di Bernardo, Italy)

While welcoming as a necessary and positive step forward the current tripartite consultations on the CTB, my delegation shares the view that the CCD should start negotiations in order to recognize points of convergence in the different drafts before us and to search for treaty language that is widely acceptable.

Negotiations on a CTB are long overdue. This is a top priority to which the CCD is committed to ensure a prompt and satisfactory solution if the international community intends to preserve and to strengthen the system of assurances against nuclear proliferation set forth in the TNP.

SALT negotiations do not reflect directly on the work of the CCD. However, they represent a unique opportunity to develop sound progress towards the final and over-all goal of the complete cessation of the nuclear arms race.

Mr. Chairman, chemical disarmament is another of the priority items to which the CCD, upon a pressing request of the General Assembly, has devoted considerable attention and lasting efforts over long years. The political problems related to chemical disarmament were touched upon by all members of this Committee. The technical aspects of a CW convention were also discussed with the assistance of qualified experts.

As a result of the CCD deliberations, a considerable amount of data is available which the Secretariat of the Conference has very accurately set in order, providing us with a comprehensive and useful summary of the results achieved.

It is perfectly known that divergent views still exist among the members of the CCD as to the key elements of a CW convention, namely, the scope and the verification system to be finally adopted with a view to achieving an effective disarmament treaty.

The Italian delegation is aware of the fact that, to overcome the present situation of "impasse", concerted action based upon renewed common efforts in dealing with key elements of the convention is needed. Therefore we await with impatience a positive outcome of the United States-USSR bilateral conversations on the subject.

At the same time we cannot refrain from sincerely regretting that the CCD was not called upon to contribute to our common endeavour in this very delicate stage of the exercise.

(Mr. Di Bernardo, Italy)

At the opening of the spring session the Italian delegation made the proposal to set up a working group on CW.

Such a proposal, in spite of the support of a number of delegations, failed to materialize. It was assumed by some delegations that the setting up of a working group might unduly complicate things rather than solve them.

For our part we share the point of view of the delegations which are convinced that if the working group was requested to concentrate on some specific issues, or on the basic principles of a convention, the CCD would have been in a position to perform very valuable work.

We furthermore believe that such a course of events would have given far less room to the mounting criticism as regards the ability of this body to perform its negotiating functions.

At this stage of the session the Italian delegation wholeheartedly hopes that no efforts will be spared to give the CCD another chance before the end of this year.

The CCD is today facing a new round of informal meetings with the participation of experts on the problem of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. The Italian delegation holds the view that this question should be dealt with bearing in mind the 1948 United Nations resolution. The 1948 United Nations resolution remains fully valid and operative. It provides for the objective identification of the types of weapons of mass destruction that the international community is striving to ban. It furthermore indicates suitable criteria likely to ascertain the actual emergence of new types of such weapons that scientific and technological progress might foster.

The Italian delegation believes that evidence as to the reliability of different criteria depends not only on their actual scientific value, but also and foremost on their ability to identify types of weapons of mass destruction of a destructive capability equivalent to atomic, chemical and biological weapons.

This complex problem -- of a fundamentally preventive nature -- has to be carefully studied, without however diverting attention from the priority issues referred to above.

In this connexion the Italian delegation highly appreciates the proposal made by Lord Goronwy-Roberts, the Head of the United Kingdom delegation, at the

(Mr. Di Bernardo, Italy)

official meeting on 28 July 1977. We share the view that a constructive approach would be a firm condemnation associated to a request to the CCD to keep the subject under review, condemnation and request which could be embodied in a resolution at the next United Nations General Assembly.

While the elimination of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction is of vital interest for all peoples and nations, it is the conviction of my delegation that more careful consideration should be given to the question of the limitation of conventional weapons.

In my country there is a growing concern about the escalation of military expenditures for conventional weapons and the uncontrolled transfer of these weapons.

In our view, restraints on conventional weapons should be adopted in parallel with progressive reduction of nuclear armaments.

In this connexion I am pleased to bring to the knowledge of our Committee a proposal that my Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Forlani recently submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in a note presenting the views of the Italian Government pursuant to operative paragraph 3 of resolution 31/189/B (XXXI) of the General Assembly (A/AC.187/52, p. 2).

This proposal envisages the establishment by the Security Council, under Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations, of a committee divided into regional sub-committees with the participation of major arms suppliers and purchasing Powers from each region, entrusted with the task of maintaining conventional weaponry at the lowest possible level.

I am confident that the Italian Government's proposal will receive thoughtful consideration in the framework of further efforts to develop more effective approaches and prompt solutions to the various problems of arms control and disarmament.

Further and substantial efforts on our part are widely expected by the international community and are urgently needed.

I should like to conclude in assuring the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament that the Italian Government is prepared to make a strong and effective contribution to the common endeavour.

Mr. LIKHATCHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): In accordance with the approved schedule of work of the Committee on Disarmament at its summer session, the coming week -- from 8 to 12 August -- is assigned for informal meetings of the Committee with the participation of experts to examine the problem of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

This problem, which I intend to comment upon in my statement today, has been examined in the Committee on Disarmament for about two years in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirtieth and thirty-first sessions. It may be stated that, from session to session of the Committee, a certain movement forward has taken place, although it has not been as rapid as it should be in view of the importance and topical character of this problem. A great amount of work has, however, been done in studying the substance of the problem and possible approaches to its solution. It is also a matter of satisfaction that the problem is gaining increasingly wide international recognition as well as in this Committee. In connexion with the Soviet initiative, representatives of a number of States have advanced many constructive ideas and considerations which, in our view, make it possible to come closer even at the present stage to agreeing on some basic provisions of a draft agreement on a generally acceptable basis.

This is why the USSR delegation expresses the hope that, from the standpoint of achieving progress in its work, the present session of the Committee will not be an exception as compared to previous sessions, and will take a further step on the way towards prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction.

In the period between the spring and summer sessions of the Committee we worked intensively to elaborate the problem further. In doing so we took into account the comments and proposals made in the past in the course of the Committee's discussions by the representatives of many countries, including those of Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, India, Pakistan, Sweden, Egypt, the United States, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, Canada, Italy and other States.

(Mr. Likhatchev, USSR)

At this stage of our work we have focused our attention on the question which has to be solved first of all, namely, the question of the scope of the prohibition. Incidentally, this question was at the centre of discussions in the Committee on Disarmament and was the subject of extremely detailed examination.

In this connexion I would recall that a particularly active discussion took place on the question of defining what should be included under new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction to be prohibited in order to outline precisely the subject of the prohibition and not to touch upon the sphere of existing types of weapons of mass destruction, including those among them which are being modernized, as well as the areas covered by existing agreements and by agreements which are being negotiated.

From the very beginning the Soviet Union proceeded from the assumption that a definition of the concept of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction, as stated in paragraph 1 of article I of the draft agreement (CCD/511), should be agreed upon through specific negotiations. In order to establish a working basis for a comprehensive and detailed study of this question and to identify criteria with a view to establishing the scope of the prohibition, the USSR delegation last summer submitted document CCD/514. Subsequent negotiations proved this to be a useful step which made it possible to come closer to a solution of the problem of defining new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

As is known, in the course of the discussions in the Committee on Disarmament, a number of delegations expressed the view that it would be advisable, in drawing up the definition, to use the 1948 formulation of the United Nations Commission for Conventional Armaments. We also believed previously that the definition we had proposed before was in harmony with that formulation and now, taking into account the wishes of a number of members of the Committee and in the light of present circumstances, we use it as a basis in elaborating the definition.

The 1948 formulation defines new types of weapons of mass destruction, as is known, on the basis of the factor of the novelty of weapons and by using the factor of commensurability of their destructive effect with known types of weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear, chemical or bacteriological weapons. Those two factors also form the basis of the definition which is being elaborated for an agreement on new types of weapons, although they have, of course, been stated in

(Mr. Likhatchev, USSR)

greater detail and elaborated upon in the light of present requirements and tasks in the field of disarmament as well as of changes that have taken place within the past 30 years, particularly in science and technology, and of the purposes of the said agreement.

The desirability of this approach is borne out, in particular, by the fact that the definition of the novelty of weapons contained in the 1948 formulation does not, in our view, make the necessary distinction between known types of weapons of mass destruction, including those that have been modernized, and new types of weapons of mass destruction which may be developed.

In order to make good these deficiencies we believe it advisable to expand somewhat that part of the 1948 formulation dealing with new weapons of mass destruction by stating it in the following way:

"... weapons which may be developed in the future, either on the basis of scientific and technological principles that are known now but that have not yet been applied severally or jointly to the development of weapons of mass destruction or on the basis of scientific and technological principles that may be discovered in the future".

The situation is exactly the same as regards the question of the level of the destructive or injuring effect of weapons of mass destruction. This part of the 1948 formulation should, in our view, be supplemented only in the sense that it is possible to develop even more effective weapons than existing ones which will be more effective not only from the point of view of destruction but also from the point of view of the injuries they cause to human beings.

Thus, taking into account considerations expressed in the Committee on Disarmament as well as with a view to achieving a greater degree of accuracy, we suggest that the definition of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction to be included in article I of the agreement should, in its complete form, be worded as follows:

"For the purposes of this Agreement, the expression 'new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction' includes weapons which may be developed in the future, either on the basis of scientific and technological principles that are known now but that have not yet been applied, severally or jointly, to the development of weapons of mass destruction or on the basis

(Mr. Likhatchev, USSR)

of scientific and technological principles that may be discovered in the future, and which will have properties similar to or more powerful than those of known types of weapons of mass destruction in destructive and/or injuring effect."

This definition, which is clear and broad, is also worded as closely as possible along the lines of the 1948 formulation on which there already exists a broad measure of agreement.

Seeking to meet the positions of those members of the Committee on Disarmament who pronounced themselves in favour of the prohibition of specific new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction on the basis of special agreements, the Soviet side provided for the possibility of applying such a method as well when necessary. It proceeds from the assumption that, parallel to a general agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction it is possible to conclude special agreements on the prohibition of specific types of these weapons.

In order to reflect this possibility in the agreement, we suggest that article I of the draft should include the following additional provision as paragraph 3: "States Parties to the Agreement may, in cases where they deem it necessary, conclude special agreements on the prohibition of particular new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction".

An important component part of our new proposal is the inclusion in article I of the draft agreement (the last sentence of paragraph 1 of article I) of the reference to the fact that a specific list of types of armaments to be prohibited will be annexed to the agreement.

In our view such a flexible approach -- where the agreement would at the same time contain a general definition of new types of weapons of mass destruction to be prohibited as well as a specific list of types and systems of such weapons to be prohibited -- would make it considerably easier to achieve a generally acceptable solution of the question of the scope of the prohibition.

Our supplemented draft agreement contains an approximate list of the types and systems of weapons of mass destruction covered by the agreement. As to the possible content of such an approximate list, the Soviet delegation suggests that it should include the following types of weapons:

(Mr. Likhatchev, USSR)

1. Radiological means of the non-explosive type acting with the aid of radioactive materials. What is meant in this case is the prohibition of the development of weapons on the basis of the use of the spent fuel of atomic reactors and of other radioactive materials designed to injure human beings through radioactive emissions and to contaminate terrain, water, military hardware, and military and civilian targets.

2. Technical means of inflicting radiation injury based on the use of charged and neutral particles to affect biological targets. When including this type of potential weapons in the list, the Soviet side proceeded from the fact that, for the last 30-40 years, there has taken place in the world an intensive development of acceleration technology. During this period the maximum energy level of particles was increased from millions of electronvolts to hundreds of billions electronvolts, and may be increased in the foreseeable future to tens of thousands of billions electronvolts. This represents tremendous progress in the development of science and technology which is of benefit to people. However, it also implies the potential possibility of the creation in the future of most powerful new means for military purposes, and this possibility should be precluded in advance.

3. Infrasonic means using acoustic radiation to affect biological targets. Even today, scientists proceed from the assumption that it is in principle possible to radiate over distances of hundreds of kilometres infrasonic oscillations at frequencies up to 10-15 Hz whose effect is most harmful to human beings. The possibility of the further development of sources of acoustic radiation up to the levels required for weapons should not be, evidently, precluded.

4. Means using electromagnetic radiation to affect biological targets. In connexion with this area I would like to say that, at previous meetings of the Committee on Disarmament, sufficiently detailed information has been already presented on the effect of certain kinds of electromagnetic radiation on biological targets. The use of such radiation may result in injuries to organs and systems of the human organism or affect its functioning.

Specialists believe that there exists a sufficient material basis for the application in practice of these scientific and technological principles with a view to the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Likhatchev, USSR)

As scientific and technological progress will continue, it would be unrealistic to regard a specific list of new types of weapons to be prohibited as exhaustive. This is why we suggest that provision should also be made for the possibility of supplementing the list as the need arises in the future.

Thus, in summary, our position on the question of the scope of the prohibition provides for: (1) the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons containing a specific list of the types to be prohibited; (2) the possibility of supplementing, in the future, the list of new types of weapons of mass destruction to be prohibited; (3) the possibility of concluding special agreements on individual specific new types of weapons of mass destruction.

This position represents, in our view, a composite approach to the solution of the question of the scope of the prohibition if one takes into account proposals presented in the Committee both by countries which are in favour of a general formulation of the prohibition and by countries which prefer to conclude special agreements on various new types of weapons of mass destruction. The solution proposed by the Soviet Union -- and this is most important -- makes it possible not only to achieve the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction in the potentially dangerous areas which have been already identified but also in principle to bar the road to the future development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

Acting on the instructions of the Government, the USSR delegation submits the supplemented draft agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons (CCD/511/Rev.1), and expresses the hope that this step will make the work of the Committee on this problem even more concrete and purposeful in order to achieve, as soon as possible, accord on the text of a generally acceptable agreement in one of the most important areas of disarmament, as we are called upon to do by United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

Mr. HAMILTON (Sweden): The Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and to Identify Seismic Events terminated its fourth session on Friday, 5 August. The progress report of the Ad Hoc Group is in front of you as Conference Room Paper No. 35. I take pleasure in saying that, in the view of my delegation, the Group has made further considerable progress in its work to establish the report on the subjects under consideration.

As to the composition of the Ad Hoc Group, we warmly welcome the fact that at this session it has been enlarged with an expert from Peru. This is particularly satisfying as it is important that experts from the southern hemisphere participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Group. I wish in this connexion to draw attention to paragraph 8 of the fourth progress report of the Ad Hoc Group, where it is pointed out that "for reasons of efficiency and scientific precision, co-operation of all CCD member States and other States with seismological stations in Central and South America and in Africa would greatly facilitate the successful completion of its work".

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, may I formally propose that the Committee decides to take note of the fourth progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and to Identify Seismic Events. I also propose that the Committee note that the Ad Hoc Group will hold its next meeting in Geneva from 27 February to 10 March 1978. In order to give delegations sufficient time to study the report, these decisions could be taken at the next official CCD meeting on Thursday this week.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.