

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.458
19 April 1988

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 19 April 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Dávid Meiszter (Hungary)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 458th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference continues its consideration of the reports of the ad hoc subsidiary bodies, as well as of the special report to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

As agreed in the timetable of meetings to be held during this week, the Conference will hold an informal meeting on its improved and effective functioning immediately after this plenary meeting.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States of America, Brazil, the United Kingdom and Mexico. I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Radoslav Deyanov, who will introduce the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, contained in document CD/825, on behalf of the Chairman.

Mr. DEYANOV (Bulgaria): On behalf of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, I have the honour to submit today to the Conference the special report of that Committee. This report is contained in document CD/825, which has been distributed today and which you will find before you.

The Ad hoc Committee held eight meetings during the first part of the session this year. In addition to dealing with its special report, the Committee spent several meetings in a general exchange of views on the subject and consideration of the existing proposals on the substance of this matter. The Chairman believes it is timely, in the light of the forthcoming third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to underline the importance that all delegations continue to attach to the conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The Chairman also believes that it is recognized that the work of the Committee has been at a standstill for several years. It was therefore encouraging that the Committee was able to begin its work early in the session and engage in a substantive discussion.

The Ad hoc Committee took full advantage of the time offered to review the state of affairs in the light of recent developments in the field of disarmament and to continue the consideration of an interesting proposal made last year by one delegation, as well as an alternative option put forward this year by the same delegation. This part of our work remained inconclusive in view of the complex nature of the issues involved. Difficulties still remain as regards the whole question of working out a "common approach" or "common formula" of security assurances, to be included in a legally binding

(Mr. Deyanov, Bulgaria)

international instrument, and the Ad hoc Committee has had to report this fact in its special report. At the same time, the Committee also underlined the wide support for a continued search for such a "common formula".

The Chairman would like to stress here, on a more positive note, that deliberations this spring on the subject have been held in a business-like manner and in a spirit of co-operation and good will. For that the Chairman would like to express his thanks to all delegations which participated in the work of the Ad hoc Committee during the first part of the session, and which helped prepare what the Chairman feels is a true, if not completely happy, report on the state of negotiations on the item for consideration by the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Deyanov, who spoke on behalf of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, for his statement introducing the report of the Committee. I intend to put the report of the Ad hoc Committee before the Conference for adoption at our plenary meeting on Tuesday 26 April.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador von Stülpnagel.

Mr. von STULPNAGEL (Federal Republic of Germany): We are all under the impression of the gruesome reports on the recent use of chemical weapons in the war between Iran and Iraq. The pictures we have seen of victims of a chemical attack reconfirm the notion that, as Foreign Minister Genscher put it, chemical weapons are not weapons, but devices for destroying man and nature.

Indeed, we cannot remain indifferent in the face of this blatant violation of international law. Rather we should view it - as was suggested in my Government's note of 7 April this year addressed to the States participating in the Conference on Disarmament - as an urgent warning to meet our responsibility in the negotiations on a global ban on chemical weapons. We must intensify our efforts and work towards the conclusion of a convention now. Chemical weapons must not have a future anywhere.

In reconfirming this commitment, to which we attach the highest priority, we can proceed from the basic agreements reached in the course of our negotiations on the main issues relating to an effective and verifiable convention. Substantial progress made in the negotiations during recent years gives rise to optimism and justifies the hope that an early agreement is possible. We have passed the point of no return. There is nothing which should stop mankind from banning chemical weapons once and for all. Therefore we must not jeopardize the important achievements and the basic consensus reached in our negotiations by introducing new concepts or developing old and collectively refused concepts. Rather, we must resolutely follow the road we have taken and try to resolve the remaining issues expeditiously and effectively.

(Mr. von Stulpnagel, Federal Republic of Germany)

The spring part of this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament is now drawing to a close. In the course of it we have continued our intensive negotiations on chemical weapons under the dedicated chairmanship of Ambassador Sujka of Poland. Detailed discussions have been conducted on most of the still outstanding issues relating to the CW convention. Despite the strenuous efforts which have been made, not all our expectations have been fulfilled. Rather, we are somewhat disappointed by the lack of progress in many areas where, on the basis of agreements achieved so far, better results should have been reached.

Let me briefly review some of the major issues on the agenda of our negotiations. First I would like to address matters dealt with in Working Group A of the Ad hoc Committee. The issue of non-production and the monitoring of the chemical industry is of crucial importance for a durable and effective convention. The verification mechanism to be established to this end has to be comprehensive, feasible, manageable, consistent and effective. In order to meet these criteria we have to devise a régime which is stringent and at the same time provides for the necessary flexibility.

We should proceed from the basic question: What is realistically verifiable or detectable? We consider the monitoring régimes for schedules [1], [2] and [3] contained in the annex to article VI to be a sound basis for a viable and effective non-production verification system. However, we consider that coverage should not be limited to those facilities which are declared under schedules [1], [2] and [3]. There should also be a verification instrument available for all other chemical industry facilities. To this end, in CD/791 of 25 January 1988 we proposed ad hoc checks, which could be managed on a routine basis. These checks, which would be initiated by the Technical Secretariat, should serve solely to ascertain whether, at the time of the check, substances listed in the annexes to article VI and not reported for the facility in question are being produced. We are convinced that by this complementary instrument for monitoring the chemical industry an optimal degree of additional transparency, and hence of additional confidence in the reliability of all States parties' compliance with the convention, can be achieved. In the course of the past weeks we have had interesting discussions on our proposal. In light of these talks we intend to further elaborate our concept of ad hoc checks. We are looking forward to further exploration of our concept during the summer part of the session.

There were two other subjects which have been extensively dealt with in Working Group A during the previous weeks: schedule [1] of article VI, and the question of super-toxic lethal chemicals not included in schedule [1].

In document CD/CW/WP.192 of 11 March 1988 we proposed a redraft of the annex to article VI [1]. We did so in the hope of bridging the differences which surfaced on this matter during lengthy discussions in the course of the intersessional work of the Ad hoc Committee. However, as consultations during the previous weeks have shown, regrettably it has not yet been possible to reach agreement on the declaration and verification régime for the substances in schedule [1]. We remain convinced that the approach taken in our working

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paper does provide a basis for a compromise solution, as the régime proposed therein builds on existing points of agreement. Thus we hope that the matter will be taken up again in the summer with a view to arriving at an eventual solution acceptable to all. The degree of agreement in principle existing on this question should make this goal attainable.

On the question of the so-called schedule [4], we expressed strong reservations on the approach proposed at last year's session. We drew particular attention to its inconsistency with the other schedules in the annex to article VI. We also argued that it would be impossible to implement schedule [4] in the form envisaged then. Although a number of questions remain as to the purpose of schedule [4] and its relevance to the objectives of the convention, we are prepared to meet the concerns expressed over this question. Thus in an effort to overcome the obstacle posed by this issue, we proposed in CD/792 of 25 January this year an approach which is at the same time effective, practicable and consistent with the régime contained in article VI as a whole. In doing so we have accepted that the régime could be based on the toxicity criterion alone, and that on this basis a list of relevant super-toxic lethal chemicals could be drawn up. We agree with Ambassador Friedersdorf that the problem should be restored to its real dimensions. We continue to be prepared to seek acceptable solutions. However, as experience in this spring session shows, it is necessary, before continuing to draft texts, to clarify what we are trying to achieve through a schedule [4]. Only when we have identified in an unambiguous manner the objectives of and reasons for a régime for super-toxic lethal chemicals will we be able to shape an effective régime tailored to defined requirements.

One of the main open questions to be resolved in the framework of Working Group B is the order of destruction of chemical weapons. The question of maintaining undiminished security for all States during the entire destruction process is of paramount importance in this regard. The preconditions for this - after the entry into force of the convention - are in the view of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany: no research on new chemical weapons; no continued production or modernization of chemical weapons; no exceptions from the general rule of verification of all existing stocks and facilities, i.e. no secret CW stocks; and, lastly, no proliferation.

In an effort to translate principles agreed by the majority of the CD members into reality, and taking account of existing disparities in chemical weapon arsenals, we made a proposal together with Italy in CD/822 of 29 March 1988, which seems to us to present a viable solution. These are the main points of our suggested phased approach to the destruction process:

Proceeding from the basic undertaking that all production of chemical weapons shall cease immediately upon the entry into force of the convention, and that all chemical weapon storage sites as well as production facilities will immediately be subjected to systematic international on-site verification, we suggest that in a first phase the States parties possessing the largest stocks of chemical weapons should proceed with the destruction of their chemical weapon stocks until an agreed level is reached. It is

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envisaged that, after the large stocks have been levelled out at the end of this phase, which we propose to be the first five years of the destruction process, all States parties possessing chemical weapons, regardless of the size of their chemical weapon stocks, will be required to destroy them. During this second phase, the existing stockpile of each State possessing CW would be subdivided into five equal amounts to be destroyed during the remaining five years of the destruction period.

Our proposal also provides for close monitoring of the destruction process. Thus we suggest that during the first phase States parties should submit regular annual reports on the reduction of their stocks. Furthermore, we envisage a review at the end of the first phase, to take stock of the results achieved so far and the experience gained. It should serve two purposes. First, it should establish that the agreed reductions have in fact been implemented in the first phase. Second, it can be used to examine the verification mechanism in the light of experience and to see whether it is adequate or whether improvements are needed. However, it will not be possible to use this review to change the timing of the overall destruction period, to extend the transitional period or to decide on a course for the execution of the convention other than that laid down in the convention.

Another important subject to be dealt with in Working Group B is the question of "abandoned chemical weapon stocks, discovered chemical weapons and old obsolete chemical weapons". After last year's intensive and sometimes controversial discussion on this topic, my delegation is actively involved in the search for a solution which is acceptable to all concerned and in conformity with the objectives and the nature of a multilateral convention.

We welcome the substantial progress we have made on article VIII of the convention since last year. Our thanks are due especially to last year's item co-ordinator for cluster IV, Dr. Krutzsch, who started to restructure this article. With the elaboration of the chapter on the Technical Secretariat at the very beginning of this year's session, we now have concluded a redraft of article VIII. We consider that article VIII is in far better shape than it was only one year ago. Now we have a better picture of the powers and functions of the organs of the treaty organization, as well as the interrelationship between them. The major issue which remains to be resolved in article VIII is the composition of the Executive Council. Admittedly, this will be one of the most intricate and difficult issues. The preliminary discussions indicate that there may be common ground to build on. I am sure that at the end of the summer session we will have an even better picture of the problems involved, and we sincerely hope that by then a solution acceptable to all will not just appear in outline but will be within reach.

Challenge inspection is of crucial importance for the convention. Only an effective solution to this question will provide the necessary confidence in the verification system as a whole. The work done in this field under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus was very encouraging. The paper included in appendix II of document CD/795 in our view provides a basis for successful completion of an acceptable challenge inspection régime. Part I of the paper

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especially is in an advanced stage of elaboration. It should be possible to put the finishing touches to it early in the summer session. The process after the submission of the inspection report and part II of Ambassador Ekéus' paper will require further detailed exploration.

In the evaluation of an inspection we believe that two basic considerations have to be taken into account. It would be unrealistic to assume that the Executive Council will be prevented from discussing the results of a challenge inspection and forming its own opinion on whether or not the requested State is in compliance. The Executive Council, a treaty organ consisting of representatives of a limited number of States parties to the convention and taking decisions by a majority, cannot take any decision or adopt specific measures which would affect the national security of one individual State party.

The role of the Executive Council and the requesting and requested States should therefore be seen from that angle. Thus the requesting State will in any event state its position on the report and the conclusion it draws from it. It will certainly adopt those measures it deems necessary to maintain its national security. On the other hand one can assume that the Executive Council, representing the entire membership, will also assess the situation, in particular when a case of non-compliance seems to have been established.

The Executive Council should in our view be permitted to publicly address a violation of the convention. In the event that the violation of the convention is not unambiguously established, it seems necessary that the result of the challenge inspection should be discussed between the requesting State, the requested State and the Executive Council with a view to clarifying the situation. If this cannot be done, another request for challenge inspection should be submitted.

If a violation is unambiguously established, the question of possible sanctions might be addressed. As international law does not provide for sanctions in the form of "convention penalties", it could be examined whether the system of collective security established by the Charter of the United Nations can provide a basis to enforce a chemical weapon ban. Normally the United Nations Security Council is the body which classifies non-compliance with a convention as threatening peace. Consequently the State party which is violating the convention could be subject to sanctions by the community of nations under Chapter VII of the Charter.

At this point I would like to draw attention to working paper CD/CW/WP.191 of 11 March which we have submitted. In it we address a number of further questions on which additional work needs to be done. We hope that the thoughts offered therein on yet unresolved problems may stimulate the negotiations on the challenge inspection régime and contribute to finding acceptable solutions.

Before concluding my remarks on the current state of our negotiations, I would like to mention briefly two subjects on which there have been intensive

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discussions since December of last year: article X (Assistance) and article XI (Economic and technological development). Quite a bit of valuable work has been done on these two articles. On both articles it has been possible to identify some common ground, which will pave the way for satisfactory solutions. My delegation especially welcomes the submission of working paper CD/802 by Argentina, which has in our view provided a good basis for the discussion on assistance. I think it should be possible to arrive at acceptable solutions for both articles if no unrealistic demands are made and if proposed solutions are in conformity and not at variance with the main objectives of the convention.

I have not been able to deal with all the aspects of our negotiations on a CW ban. For example, I did not make any reference to the very useful discussion we had on the final clauses, a discussion we hope to continue in the summer in order to arrive at agreed formulations for articles XII to XVI. I would, however, before ending my statement, like to thank the chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Sujka, as well as the working group chairmen Mr. Cima, Mr. Macedo and Mr. Numata, for their excellent work and their commitment. We are confident that under their guidance we will be able to make substantive progress in the coming summer session. I would also like to add that the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee and the chairmen of the working groups can continue to rely on our active support in their endeavours aimed at the early conclusion of an effective CW convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Friedersdorf.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): At the plenary meeting on 14 April I presented the assessment of the United States delegation of the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons during the spring part of the 1988 session. Today, I would like to look ahead to the summer part of the session.

In some recent plenary statements concern has been expressed that the negotiations have not moved more rapidly. The United States delegation sometimes shares this frustration. However, important work has been accomplished in a number of substantive areas. We hope and expect that even more will be achieved in the remainder of the 1988 session. We must bear in mind that the key to future progress is not in external developments, or artificial deadlines, but in the efforts of individual delegations and of the Conference as a whole to come to grips with the remaining key issues.

There are, in fact, numerous unresolved issues that require detailed negotiation before a convention can be realized. These issues are difficult ones, and solutions are not readily at hand. The United States delegation will continue to address these issues aggressively because of the strong and continuing United States commitment to the negotiation of a comprehensive, effectively verifiable and truly global ban on chemical weapons.

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

Some delegations have taken practical steps to tackle key issues by contributing useful working papers. A few others, unfortunately, have emphasized rhetoric rather than concrete proposals. The United States delegation hopes that in the summer there will be more concrete proposals, and much less empty and unhelpful rhetoric.

We also hope that during the summer the trend toward greater openness about chemical weapon capabilities and industrial capabilities will be reinforced and extended. The United States attaches considerable importance to this. We welcome the statements made by a number of delegations since January. We urge those delegations that have not already done so to indicate during the summer whether or not their countries possess chemical weapons. Accurate declarations can make a major contribution toward building the confidence necessary for conclusion of the negotiations and entry into force of the convention. Inaccurate declarations or silence will inevitably have the opposite effect of diminishing confidence and making completion of a convention more difficult.

Given the unhappy experiences of the past, declarations cannot always be accepted at face value. They should be viewed cautiously and critically, and in conjunction with other claims by the same country. In our view, building confidence requires that a country also satisfy any concerns that arise about the declarations that are made. How follow-up queries are answered will play a large role in determining whether confidence decreases or increases.

Today the United States is taking another major step in demonstrating openness about its chemical weapon capabilities. In the past, most recently on 10 July 1986, detailed information was provided on stockpile locations and plans for destruction in our working paper, CD/711. Earlier this year we indicated that our stockpile is smaller than that of the Soviet Union. Today we are providing to each delegation a document that contains considerable additional information, bearing the designation CD/830. This document identifies each toxic chemical in the United States stockpile and provides extensive information on its properties. Detailed diagrams depict each chemical munition in the United States stockpile, including the binary artillery shell. Specific data is provided about the characteristics of each munition.

In addition to the information on toxic chemicals and munitions, the document contains detailed information on the United States programme for destruction of chemical weapons. Since 1974 the United States has destroyed almost 4,000 agent tons of chemical weapons. In the coming years even larger quantities will be destroyed. The document contains detailed material, including numerous pictures and diagrams, on the technology that the United States has developed and is using for this difficult task. The material in the document was presented to representatives of the Soviet Union during their visit to the Tooele army depot between 18 and 21 November 1987. We are now making it available to all delegations represented in this Conference. We will do our best to respond to any questions delegations may have.

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

The United States delegation welcomed the opportunity recently to participate in the Shikhany workshop, and we consider the information gained from that visit a valuable reduction in the secrecy that has long surrounded the Soviet chemical weapons programme. None the less, the visit has given rise to a number of points that we are seeking to clarify with the Soviet Union.

More recently, the Soviet delegation declared that its chemical weapon stocks do not exceed 50,000 tons, and proposed a so-called multilateral data exchange of certain other chemical-weapons-related information. These most recent steps, unfortunately, do not reflect a balanced approach to data exchange. Nor, in our view, do they build confidence or facilitate the negotiations.

The distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Soleby, raised questions about the Soviet stockpile figure on 8 March. My delegation has similar questions. The Soviet stockpile declaration is vaguely worded and the figure it contains is impossible to assess as an isolated number. We hope that the Soviet delegation will respond positively to Ambassador Soleby's request, and our own, that it provide more information which might clarify the situation. In our view, such information should specify whether the declaration covers bulk agent as well as filled munitions. Details on the number and location of Soviet chemical weapon production facilities and storage sites are also essential.

We cannot agree with the assertion on 15 March by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Nazarkin, that the total size of chemical weapon stocks is the most important statistic. We believe that the number and location of facilities is a much more significant and relevant indicator of chemical weapon capability, and is more critical to our negotiations. We are disappointed, too, that the Soviet delegation continues to advocate an approach to data exchange that in our view is unbalanced. This approach would provide the Soviet Union with much more information about United States capabilities than the United States would receive about Soviet capabilities. Much of the information provided by the United States in CD/711 is presented in terms of percentages of the overall stockpile. If we were now to release the figure for our stockpile size, the Soviet Union would know the quantities of stocks at each of the depots listed in CD/711. They would know what quantities of United States stocks were in bulk and in munitions. And they would know what quantity of usable chemical munitions the United States possesses. And, of course, Soviet officials realized that a single number from us would give them this bonanza. It is little wonder that they emphasize this number. The net result would be that the Soviet Union would know almost everything about the United States chemical weapon stockpile, whereas theirs would continue to be largely shrouded in secrecy. We can hardly agree to such a one-sided approach. Exchanges must be reciprocal. To facilitate greater confidence-building, the Soviet Union could respond constructively to questions about its declarations and present balanced proposals for data exchange.

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

Two recent proposals for data exchange and confidence-building do represent a constructive approach. I am referring to the 14 April proposal by the Federal Republic of Germany for multilateral data exchange and the 18 February proposal by the Soviet Union for testing of verification procedures in the chemical industry.

The Federal Republic of Germany's proposal, for example, is directly connected to the negotiating tasks of the Conference. The data requested could assist negotiators in assessing the number of facilities subject to international verification and identifying which countries would be affected. Assuming that agreement can be reached as to what data should be declared and when these declarations should be made, we must confront the difficult problem of implementing the proposed exchange of data. We also must deal with the fact that the Conference on Disarmament does not include a number of relevant States. Will data elicited from member States - even if reported accurately and comprehensively - be adequate to build confidence or to provide a useful data base? If not, how do we expand this exchange to encompass non-member States? And what are the consequences if participation is less than adequate, or less than truthful? These are issues we must consider in our future deliberations.

We also note with interest the Soviet proposal for a multilateral effort to develop and test inspection methods for commercial facilities. We note that in 1986 the delegations of the Netherlands and Australia reported on trial inspections of commercial facilities in their countries. In 1987 the delegations of the United Kingdom and Finland suggested that countries co-operate in devising verification procedures. The Soviet proposal can be seen as a natural outgrowth of these earlier activities and suggestions.

We believe that a test of verification procedures at commercial facilities would be premature at this stage, since the procedures themselves have not been developed in the CD. The first step must be for each country with facilities subject to inspection to do its homework. United States experts are already actively engaged in developing inspection procedures for commercial facilities. We urge the Soviet Union and other countries to conduct similar work. We would also welcome elaboration from the Soviet delegation of its ideas for the actual implementation of its proposal. How would it actually work?

In looking ahead to the summer part of the 1988 session I have emphasized today attitudes more than specific issues. The attitudes with which delegations approach the work ahead will play a critical role in determining whether significant progress is made. We hope that delegations will return determined to come to grips with the key issues. We hope that they will put aside propaganda and devote their energies to substance. We hope that they will be more open about their military and commercial capabilities, and we hope that they will come with specific proposals, rather than simply reacting to the ideas of others.

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

After reviewing the advances made across a broad front during the spring part of the session, I am confident that further advances can and will be made during the summer. The appendices of the draft special report of the Ad hoc Committee prepared in view of the forthcoming third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as well as the plenary statements made this spring and other documents before the Ad hoc Committee, provide a wealth of material that can serve as a foundation for further progress. Our delegation will be returning to Washington soon to consult with its authorities and to assist in preparations for the summer. We shall look forward to resuming the negotiations in early July.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement. It is my understanding that the secretariat is processing document CD/830 as requested. I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil, Ambassador de Azambuja, in his capacity as co-ordinator of the Group of 21 for agenda item 1, to introduce document CD/829.

Mr. AZAMBUJA (Brazil): Mr. President, I will not address formal words of congratulation to you as I am not speaking in my own national capacity but as the Group of 21 co-ordinator on item 1 of the agenda. It will be my pleasure to do so when I speak to the Conference as the Brazilian representative next week.

We have before us, in document CD/829, a draft mandate for an Ad hoc Committee on item 1 of the agenda of the Conference proposed by the Group of 21. Once again our group is making a considerable effort to get things going, and we again indicate that we are prepared to sacrifice points to which both individually and collectively we attach great importance in order to find a possible common denominator.

The draft mandate is, I think, self-explanatory. I wish, however, to draw the Conference's attention to the footnote, and in particular to its final sentence, where it is indicated that if flexibility similar to that which we are demonstrating is shown by other groups, the draft mandate contained in document CD/520/Rev.2 of 21 March 1986 would be superseded by the text that is now introduced by me and placed before you.

May I just say how appreciative I am of all the good work and good will shown by Group of 21 delegations which have made the presentation of the paper possible. Although thanks are due to many, it would be unfair not to single out the efforts and the commitment of the Mexican delegation and its leader, Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, who have been tireless in the pursuit of progress in our work across the board and in all agenda items, showing the indispensable will to compromise and to negotiate.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Solesby.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): The distinguished Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany on 14 April introduced on behalf of a group of Western countries a paper on provision of data relevant to the chemical weapons convention. The United Kingdom is one of those countries on behalf of whom he spoke.

The paper he tabled mainly concerns the provision of data on a multilateral basis. It also envisages exchange of additional and more detailed data between States on a bilateral basis. I would like to elaborate on our own approach to all this. The United Kingdom has long attached importance to the idea of data exchange. In March 1983 we pointed out, in CD/353, that "in order to demonstrate that the inspection of commercial facilities would not be too burdensome, it would be useful to know how many facilities world-wide produce" chemicals of concern to the convention, and we called upon members of the then Committee on Disarmament to furnish such data in relation to their civil chemical industries. In an annex to that paper we gave the relevant information about our own civil industry, which we subsequently updated on two occasions.

The course of the chemical weapons negotiations since then has, I think, confirmed that data exchange would be useful. Indeed there is a growing consensus that in certain regards it is essential. Early data exchange would serve three purposes:

First, the drafting of certain provisions of the convention, in particular those relating to the destruction timetable, verification, organization and costs. For this purpose multilateral data exchange will be essential before the convention is concluded and should be undertaken as soon as possible;

Secondly, the early effective functioning of the convention. As we pointed out in CD/769, the sooner information is available the sooner we can make arrangements for the smooth functioning of the convention, such as training of key personnel in the Technical Secretariat;

And thirdly, as confidence-building measures to create an atmosphere of trust and assurance which in turn would facilitate our negotiations and help encourage wider adherence. This is also a matter of high priority.

We welcome the statements made here by several distinguished delegates on the status of the chemical weapon capabilities of their countries and on the production of certain toxic chemicals for civil purposes. We hope that other delegates will soon follow suit. I have also just listened with great interest to the statement by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, in which he announces further information which his delegation is tabling on their own chemical weapon capabilities.

We have also welcomed the memorandum on the multilateral exchange of data presented by the Soviet Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Petrovsky, on 18 February. However, we do wonder whether the data exchanges proposed in that memorandum would be sufficient to permit the drafting of an effective convention.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

Indeed, the paper tabled by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of a group of countries including the United Kingdom sets out what we regard as the minimum data exchange required for drafting purposes. We consider this exchange should be undertaken as soon as possible. It is essential that those States with the largest stocks of chemical weapons should be amongst the first to provide this data. We do not think the absence of agreed definitions for some of the terms used in the list should hold up the exchange of data. We envisage each State making clear what criteria it has used in compiling its data. Similarly we see no need for negotiations about data exchange. Let each of us provide unilaterally as much data as possible and as soon as possible.

I come now to data exchange for confidence-building measures. In my statement of 8 March I emphasized the high importance my authorities attach to this. We need to give each other as much information as we can about our capabilities in the various areas which the convention will cover. Things should be clearly above board, so that all of us can be reassured that our partners are negotiating in good faith. This calls for considerably more detailed data than that needed for purely drafting purposes. It might be helpful if I gave an idea of the sort of information we consider should be provided for this purpose. An exhaustive list is not feasible as the requirements will differ from country to country. However, the following are examples of the information we think should be included:

First, location and capacity of chemical weapon production, storage and destruction facilities;

Secondly, a detailed quantitative breakdown of chemical weapon stockpiles by site and by agent, as well as by munition and agent stored in bulk;

Thirdly, numbers of civil plants producing, processing or consuming chemicals on each of schedules 1, 2 and 3 above the thresholds to be agreed and the names of the chemicals concerned;

Fourthly, locations of research and development facilities producing chemicals on schedule 1 and the location of the permitted single, small-scale production facility;

Fifthly, plans for the destruction of chemical weapon production facilities.

This more detailed information might be provided bilaterally as a confidence-building measure. Alternatively it might be provided publicly so that it could have the added advantage of facilitating the smooth early functioning of the convention. It is up to each State to choose.

Exchange visits to military and civil chemical facilities can also have a useful confidence-building effect. Visits are not of course an alternative to providing the information I have mentioned, but rather one of the possible vehicles for doing so. Several countries have already conducted such visits - the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and the

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

Soviet Union for example - and we look forward to the process continuing. The United Kingdom in March 1979 invited members of the Conference on Disarmament to visit our former chemical weapons pilot plant at Nancekuke as well as an organophosphorus chemical facility near Birmingham. We reported this visit together with our experience in destroying the facility at Nancekuke in document CD/15. We have recently arranged an exchange visit with the Soviet Union under which a Soviet team will visit our chemical defence establishment at Porton Down at the end of May and a British team will visit the Soviet military facility at Shikhany in early July. We are also considering sympathetically the proposal made by Deputy Minister Petrovsky on 18 February for an international verification test on civil chemical facilities.

It is sometimes argued that data exchange can diminish rather than expand confidence and we all know examples where this has happened. It is a fact that some initial disclosures of information will give rise to further questions or may not tally with the assessments of others. In these cases we would expect that the process of data exchange will continue until the necessary confidence has been established. In some instances verification of data exchange on a bilateral basis before conclusion of the convention could greatly help to achieve this.

I have recently returned from a meeting of experts organized by the United Nations Secretariat in Dagomys, where we enjoyed not only a most interesting exchange of views but also the generous hospitality of our Soviet hosts. There seemed there to be a general consensus in favour not only of verification, the specific subject of the meeting, but also more widely in favour of greater openness and transparency on military matters. Data exchange during the negotiating process, when conducted in a positive fashion, can contribute in a tangible way to the search for a common agreement. My delegation hope that the type of information set out in the paper presented by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany as well as in my statement today, will be provided by participants in the chemical weapons negotiations in the very near future. We ourselves will be continuing to play an active part in this exchange.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for her statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, my delegation is pleased to see presiding over our work, and for a period which instead of one month will last for three months, a person of such objectivity and skill as yourself. You can be assured of the total co-operation of my delegation.

The first item on our agenda, adopted unanimously at the inaugural meeting of this year, held on 2 February last was, as will be recalled, that concerning a "nuclear test ban". It has rightly been said that in the area of disarmament there is no other measure that has been the subject of such protracted consideration. The resolutions adopted on this topic by the

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

United Nations General Assembly and many other governmental and non-governmental bodies can be counted in their hundreds. To date, nevertheless, all that has been attained is what has come to be known as a partial test ban, through a variety of treaties, the most significant of which is the one signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963, which entered into force on 10 October of the same year. In order to help change that situation, the delegation of Mexico, along with the delegations of the other 20 countries that comprise the Group of 21, has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament the draft mandate that is to be found in document CD/829, which has been presented to the Conference today by the co-ordinator for that subject in the Group of 21, Ambassador de Azambuja, with his customary eloquence. The two main paragraphs of the document, with which it begins, are worded as follows:

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad hoc Committee on item 1 of its agenda with the objective of carrying out the multilateral negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

"The Ad hoc Committee will set up two working groups which will deal, respectively, with the following interrelated questions:

"(a) Working group I, - Contents and scope of the treaty;

"(b) Working group II - Compliance and verification."

As can be seen, and contrary to what frequently occurs, the co-sponsors of the draft do not claim to have a monopoly of truth, but recognize in advance that each delegation has the right to maintain the view that it considers appropriate. Through the adoption of the draft, then, the Conference can establish an Ad hoc Committee: "with the objective of carrying out the multilateral negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty". "With the objective" is a formula that, as I said in the statement I made in the First Committee of the Assembly last October, is open to the widest variety of interpretations. For my delegation this is an immediate objective, but for other delegations, for instance the delegation of the United States, which has said so on several occasions, it is a long-term objective. Therefore, if this draft mandate were to be adopted, the delegation of Mexico could set down in a statement what its interpretation is. The delegation of the United States, or any other delegation, could also indicate its interpretation. In that way the draft in question could be adopted by consensus without any of the delegations of member States of the Conference on Disarmament having to abandon its position. The Ad hoc Committee would set up the two working groups mentioned in the mandate and would commence its work immediately.

Unless there is already a consensus in favour of the adoption of the draft mandate contained in document CD/829, it is not the wish of the co-sponsors that the Conference should take a decision on it until the commencement of the summer session. We trust that by then the sought-for unanimity will be easily obtained.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I recognize the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ambassador Nazarkin.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): In his statement today, the distinguished representative of the United States, Ambassador Friedersdorf, touched upon the important question of the multilateral exchange of data before the convention is signed. The same thing occurred with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Great Britain, Ambassador Solesby. I would like to make some brief comments in connection with these two statements.

To begin with I would like to point out that a multilateral exchange of data before the signing of the convention is, first, an important confidence-building measure, and second, a means which ought to contribute to the elaboration of the convention. At least that is the Soviet Union's approach to the multilateral exchange. Against that background the Soviet Union has declared the size of its chemical weapon stockpile. The representative of the United States devoted a critical part of his statement to this fact. I strongly object to his assertions, which are designed to belittle the importance of this fact.

As an example of why we think that the presentation of such data is important I might refer, for instance, to the recent proposal made by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, which, in a document on the order of destruction of chemical weapon stocks put forward jointly with the delegation of Italy, proposed that the process of destruction should be begun by the States with the largest stocks of chemical weapons. I do not intend now to give an assessment of this proposal, but it seems to me that it would be justified for the States with the largest stocks to begin the destruction process. However, in order to solve this problem we obviously have to know in advance which States have the largest stocks of chemical weapons. And if we take this practical aspect, it will be clear that data concerning the volume of stocks are naturally very important in elaborating the convention.

The distinguished representative of the United States also emphasized strongly that the data submitted by the United States constitute what is necessary for the negotiations. Such an approach will certainly not move us forward in solving this matter. That is precisely why we put forward our proposals this year in the form of a memorandum where we set forth our views on which data States must exchange before the convention is signed - a memorandum which did not apply to the data which the Soviet Union had already submitted. We think that the volume of information which should be exchanged by States should take account of certain objective criteria, and should certainly not be based on the data provided by one State or another. We have, of course, given attention to the proposal made by the Federal Republic of Germany and the proposal made by Great Britain today concerning the content of the information which it is proposed should be exchanged. We will examine these considerations attentively.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

I would also like to note with satisfaction the statement which was made today by the distinguished representative of Great Britain, Ambassador Solesby, to the effect that the English side views favourably the proposal made by Deputy Minister Petrovsky on 18 February concerning an experiment in international verification at commercial chemical enterprises. I would also like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to Ambassador Solesby for her kind words to the Soviet side concerning the organization of a recent meeting of experts in Dagomys.

Allow me to return to the statement made by the representative of the United States. In the statement he made today he opposed carrying out an experiment in verification at commercial enterprises at this stage because, he said, the procedures themselves have not yet been elaborated. I would like to explain once again, although the Soviet delegation has already done so, that the point of the experiment which we propose is, as we see it, that its results will help in elaborating the procedures and will help in the negotiations. We already have some basis for such procedures. Carrying out the experiment should show in practice what we might have left out in these procedures, what should be added to them, how they should be developed and clarified. This is where we see the main point of the experiment, and therefore to wait until we finish elaborating our procedures, and then to carry out this experiment, in my opinion, is of no value whatsoever: what is the point of the experiment if the procedures have already been worked out?

I would like to conclude with the same words as those used by the distinguished Ambassador Friedersdorf in his ending statement. He said: "And we hope that they" - meaning delegations - "will come with specific proposals, rather than simply reacting to the ideas of others." I would like to endorse this call, with a small addition: We hope that they will come with specific proposals, rather than simply reacting to the ideas of others in a negative way.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I recognize the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): Our delegation has listened carefully to the statement made today by the distinguished representative of Brazil, Ambassador Azambuja, introducing for the Group of 21 a draft mandate for an Ad hoc Committee under agenda item 1, "nuclear test ban" (CD/829). This mandate was originally introduced in 1987 by eight delegations belonging to that Group. In the Conference's report on its work during 1987 (CD/787), a group of Western countries, including the United States, pointed out that the approach in this draft mandate, as contained in CD/772, was not new. These countries further pointed out that the mandate they had proposed, contained in CD/521, continued to provide a viable framework in which to commence and carry out substantive work on agenda item 1. My delegation continues to be of this view.

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

I would like to make one additional point concerning the mandate proposed today by the Group of 21. The distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles, has today suggested that the wording of this mandate allows for different interpretations of the formulation "with the objective of carrying out the multilateral negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty". He has suggested that some would interpret this formulation to mean that multilateral negotiations would begin immediately, and that others would interpret it to mean that the objective remained a long-term objective. For our delegation this is a major liability of the proposed mandate. Mandates, of course, should be clear in their meaning, so that all delegations understand them in the same way. Otherwise, our work could not proceed without confusion and misunderstanding.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? That is not the case. That concludes my list of speakers for today.

I should now like to inform you that informal open-ended consultations on draft substantive paragraphs under agenda items 3, 2 and 1, in this order, will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3 p.m. in conference room I. Also, in the same room, at 4 p.m. this afternoon, informal open-ended consultations will be held on the draft report of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The formal open-ended consultations dealing with the questions of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace in the context of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament have been rescheduled for 3 p.m. today in the conference room on the 6th floor of the secretariat.

As I announced at the opening of this meeting, I intend now to adjourn the plenary and convene, in five minutes' time an informal meeting of the Conference devoted to the consideration of its improved and effective functioning. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday 21 April at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.