

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 9 August 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Wisber Loeis (Indonesia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 472nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference starts today consideration of agenda 3, entitled "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". In conformity with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, however, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Mexico, Peru and Pakistan. 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 you presiding over our discussions during this month, which each year is undoubtedly one of the most important months for the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference will no doubt benefit from the experience and knowledge of the subject we know you possess. As far as my delegation is concerned you may count on our unreserved co-operation. My congratulations also go to the distinguished representative of India, who served as President during the previous month, as well as all the representatives participating in the work of this forum for the first time.

The meeting being held today by the Conference on Disarmament is the first to take place since last Friday, 5 August 1988, on which date 25 years had passed since the signing in Moscow of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water. The Governments of the five countries - Indonesia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Mexico - which, through their representatives to the Conference on Disarmament, submitted on that day a joint proposal for amendment of the Treaty to which I have referred, which is to be found in document CD/852, for consideration in a conference of the parties to the Treaty in conformity with the provisions of article II, are convinced that nothing could be more appropriate for the celebration of such a happy anniversary.

It is for that reason that, as early as 1963, they proclaimed in the preamble of the Treaty their determination to endeavour to bring about an end to all, and I underline the word "all", nuclear weapon test explosions, and to continue negotiations to that end. Five years later, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was signed in 1968, and whose preamble makes reference to the determination expressed by the parties to the Moscow Treaty, to which I have just referred, included in article VI an undertaking to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament". The United Nations Secretary-General, at the inaugural meeting of the 1972 session, made the following statement:

"No other question in the field of disarmament has been the subject of so much study and discussion as the question of stopping nuclear weapon tests. I believe that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have been so fully explored that only a political decision is now necessary in order to achieve final agreement."

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The Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in its final declaration, which was adopted by consensus on 21 September 1985, "deeply regretted that a comprehensive multilateral nuclear test-ban treaty banning all nuclear tests by all States in all environments for all time had not been concluded" and called on all the nuclear-weapon States to participate in the urgent negotiation and conclusion of such a treaty as a matter of the highest priority in the Conference on Disarmament. The six heads of State or government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, who since 1985 have been meeting and making joint declarations to further peace and disarmament, have from the very outset referred expressly to the need to put an end to all nuclear weapon tests. In the Delhi Declaration adopted in the Indian capital on 28 January 1985, they stated:

"We further urge the nuclear-weapon States to immediately halt the testing of all kinds of nuclear weapons, and to conclude, at an early date, a treaty on a nuclear weapon test ban. Such a treaty would be a major step towards ending the continuous modernization of nuclear arsenals."

In the Mexico Declaration adopted in the city of Ixtapa on 7 August 1986, they stated:

"We remain convinced that no issue is more urgent and crucial today than bringing to an end all nuclear tests. Both the qualitative and the quantitative development of nuclear weapons exacerbate the arms race, and both would be inhibited by the complete abolition of nuclear weapons testing.

"Furthermore, it is clear that continued development of nuclear weapons by those who already possess them is detrimental to the efforts to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by other States which have until now refrained from acquiring them. We must recognise that, just as a drug addict cannot be cured by injecting him with more and more drugs neither can an arms-addicted world be saved from war by an infinite accumulation of weapons. The time to stop is now."

In the declaration that bears the name of the capital of Sweden, where it was adopted on 21 February this year, they stated:

"Agreements to reduce existing nuclear arsenals must be backed up by decisive measures to check the unbridled development of new generations of ever more dreadful and sophisticated nuclear weapons. The single most effective measure would be to end all nuclear weapon tests by all States. Such a step would be of crucial importance not only for achieving this objective, but also for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to countries which have so far refrained from acquiring them.

"The United States of America and the Soviet Union have started bilateral negotiations on gradually establishing lower limits on nuclear tests. Any agreement that leaves room for continued testing would not be

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acceptable. We stress once again that a comprehensive test ban is already long overdue. Pending that, we reiterate our call for an immediate suspension of all nuclear testing, by all States."

In connection with this matter, the General Assembly, in three resolutions adopted successively in 1985, 1986 and 1987, made recommendations that culminated, in the last of those resolutions, with a request addressed to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Moscow Treaty to "formally submit an amendment proposal to the depositary Governments with a view to convening a conference at the earliest possible date to consider amendments to the Treaty that would convert it into a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty."

It is in order to ensure that this request or recommendation is followed up that the five representatives I referred to at the beginning have submitted on behalf of their respective Governments the proposal for amendment of the Moscow Treaty that should be considered by a conference of the parties to the Treaty convened for that purpose, as soon as a third or more of them so request, a requirement that we hope will be fulfilled this very year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement, as well as for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Ambassador de Rivero.

Mr. de RIVERO (Peru) (translated from Spanish): First of all, Mr. President, I should like to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you presiding over our work during this month. We have no doubt that your wealth of experience and your great tact will make a significant contribution to the joint effort which brings us together in this negotiating forum.

The serious difficulties facing the Conference on Disarmament in fulfilling its mandate under agenda item 1, "Total cessation of nuclear tests", offer eloquent proof of the persistence of positions encountered among those who are supposed to have assumed a commitment to negotiate multilateral disarmament measures in this forum. But they also indicate clearly the inherent limitations of the Conference on Disarmament in heeding and better reflecting the collective call of the peoples of the world for the final cessation of nuclear testing in all environments. If all Governments were to decide to organize a world referendum to sound out the feelings of mankind, there is no doubt that the overwhelming response of the citizens of all countries would be in favour of an immediate moratorium on testing, followed by a ban. The fact that the Conference on Disarmament systematically sidesteps this urgent need to a certain extent means that it is turning its back on reality and ignoring the call of the international community, countering it with an uncompromising conception of national security based on power politics and not on an egalitarian and all-round form of security stemming from a democratic approach to international relations.

In this matter the Group of 21 has demonstrated great flexibility and openness, to the extent that it has made concessions and recently adopted positions far removed from its original stance. Indeed, there is a great deal of difference between what was put forward by the Group of 21 in document CD/492 of March 1984, which demanded the immediate beginning of

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multilateral negotiations, and their position of April this year, reflected in document CD/829, requesting the establishment of an ad hoc committee with the objective of carrying out multilateral negotiations, with no reference to their being immediate.

It is important for the peoples of the world to know that it is not the intransigence of the Group of 21 or its lack of realism which are causing the Conference on Disarmament to shirk its responsibilities in respect of the total cessation of nuclear testing, but rather the obstinacy of those who, with nuclear weapons in their arsenals, persist in complicated stances based on theoretical constructs, thereby rendering the worst possible disservice to the régime of nuclear non-proliferation. Peru believes that the draft mandate appearing in the document of the Group of 21 (CD/829) is totally neutral and is best suited to the specific positions that States represented in this forum may have. Though we acknowledge that it contains a commitment to multilateral negotiations in the future, it does not make them inevitable immediately, nor does it determine their pace. In other words, it strikes a balance between individual interests and the interests of international community as a whole. In this context, any delay or digging in to intransigent positions will be incomprehensible and illogical in the eyes of international public opinion, and over time will of course diminish the role played by this forum in the disarmament process.

Largely as a result of the fact that the Conference on Disarmament has been repeatedly thwarted in its efforts to establish an ad hoc committee on the total cessation of nuclear testing, Peru has since 1985 been working with Indonesia, Mexico, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia to promote the convening of a conference to amend the 1963 partial nuclear test-ban Treaty. It is as a consequence of that gradual and considered process, led by a tireless fighter for disarmament, Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, that the representatives of these five countries last week conveyed to the depositary States an amendment proposal together with a request for the convening of a conference of the parties to consider the proposal. The Government of Venezuela has also subscribed this initiative. This morning the distinguished Ambassador of the Soviet Union, Mr. Yuri Nazarkin, informed the co-sponsors of the steps taken by his country as a depositary State to set in motion the machinery under article II of that Treaty. We hope that similar actions will be taken by the two other depositary States. This approach to the amendment is no emotional response to the stubborn opposition of one super-Power but an action stemming from one of the provisions of the 1963 Treaty stipulating the conclusion of an agreement on the matter. Consequently, it is to be hoped that the depositary States will live up to their obligations and will clear the way for the holding of this review conference.

The Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is continuing its work in a seemingly normal manner; but we have the impression that it has slowed down, or, at all events, that the chemical-weapon States which are represented at the Conference so far lack sufficient political will to overcome the differences which still exist in certain crucial areas. As a contribution to confidence-building, and in full accordance with the openness in the area of military activities advocated by Peru, I am pleased to state today before this

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forum that my country does not possess or produce chemical weapons. Consequently, when we say that the future convention must include compensatory machinery, we mean that it must contain clauses for use in the event that it becomes invalid. That is to say that its provisions should in no way give States parties possessing chemical weapons grounds for increasing their arsenals during the destruction period, which is scheduled to cover 10 years. Moreover, they should not develop, produce or test new types of chemical weapons. And if, after the 10-year period, one or more States parties still have chemical weapons in their arsenals, then the Convention will become invalid because it will have lost its *raison d'être*, so that the obligations entered into by all States will lapse.

Last week the distinguished Ambassador of Canada set out his country's position on jurisdiction and control. In this regard my delegation views these comments as very appropriate. In connection with a subsidiary operating on territory belonging to a State party or under its administration or international responsibility, it is obviously for that State to apply its legislation in force. However, this can be supplemented by establishing two channels of co-operation in order to block indirect ways of getting round the convention. We are specifically referring to bilateral co-operation between the State party and the State in which the main company has its headquarters, whether the latter is party to the convention or not, and to multilateral co-operation through the future international organization if the bilateral channel proves impractical or inadequate. What is important is that there should be no excuse for a State party hosting in any way a company involved in the chemical industry to be exempted from its obligations in respect of that company.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space has become a priority item on our agenda. Despite that, tackling this topic remains complex because of the diversity of interests at stake and because of the existence of a legal framework which, though imperfect, involves an appreciable number of States. Many proposals have been made to avert what the press has called "star wars", but leaving aside the excessively dramatic reactions to the risk that this threat will become a reality, the fact is that matters are fortunately manageable and, at the same time, negotiations are continuing between the super-Powers to establish a modus vivendi which will banish the immediate danger.

When the Treaty on principles governing the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, was adopted in 1967, the conviction very probably prevailed that military competition in outer space was thereby being ruled out. Unfortunately, this has not been so, and now science and technology are presenting us with a new challenge. The 1967 Treaty is a testimony to the relativity of agreements which fall under the doctrine of arms control. It is not a bad multilateral instrument, still less does it leave the essentials out. The fact is that it is a treaty valid for its time and consistent with the dynamics always imposed by scientific and technological development. This is the reason why in this very forum in August 1987, Peru raised the need to amend the Treaty. Now we also have a draft from Venezuela. When last year Peru raised the question of amending the 1967 Treaty, it stressed on that occasion the need to prohibit the deployment in orbit of any device bearing any type of weapon. This approach is more

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pragmatic, expeditious and practical; it does not attempt to define space weapons, as this would be as difficult as to try and find a definition of land-based weapons generally accepted by all. What is important in a weapon is not so much the space or area in which it operates as its function and effect which characterize it as such, in addition to an always hostile intent. Hence, whether a device bearing any type of weapon in space is permanently or semi-permanently present is of no interest. Nor is its principle of operation. Now, to the extent that it is not only by deploying a weapon in orbit that a given effect can be produced in space, it is necessary, as my delegation has previously pointed out, to "multilateralize" the basic obligations under the ABM Treaty in order to rule out any possibility of sidestepping the spirit of the 1967 Treaty which reserves outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Verification is the expression of mutual trust and is called upon to generate greater trust. Verification is not a police type of activity; its main function is deterrence. It does not point to the future intentions of States, it confines itself to detecting non-compliance by commission and by omission. This aside is valid in respect of item 5 of our agenda. Verification in outer space may be carried out using national means of verification and through multilateral action. The 1967 Treaty was essentially based on the former. It is obvious that, if this international instrument is to be amended, priority will have to be given to multilateral verification. From this standpoint the amendments to the 1967 Treaty, in addition to improving the existing verification machinery, should include express provisions relating to review conferences so that States parties are in a position to carry out endogenous reforms to adapt the verification machinery to the imperatives of science and technology. The important experience acquired in 1986 on the occasion of the Second Review Conference of the parties to the 1972 biological and toxin weapons Treaty is a highly stimulating and very instructive example of what can be done when States parties have the necessary political will.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Mr. Ezdi.

Mr. ASIF EZDI (Pakistan): Mr. President, I should like to begin my statement by congratulating you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference for the month of August. As two brotherly Asian countries linked together by the ties of a common faith, Pakistan and Indonesia have a record of close co-operation in international forums. We would like to assure you of our full support in the performance of your important duties. Knowing your diplomatic skills and experience, we are confident that the work of the Conference during the month will be guided in a most efficient manner.

I should also like to express appreciation for the able stewardship of the Conference last month by your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Teja of India. With his departure and that of Ambassador Tin Tun of Burma and Ambassador Meiszter of Hungary, the Conference has been deprived of the skills of three of its most distinguished heads of delegation, each of whom made important contributions to our work. We offer them our best wishes in their future assignments and careers.

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Last Friday marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the partial test-ban treaty. The signing of the Treaty on 5 August a quarter-century ago to ban nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water was a historic event. It was widely acclaimed for having removed the threat of radioactive fall-out to human health and survival.

The PTBT was welcomed equally for the promise it held out of further steps on the road to nuclear disarmament. It was the expectation of the international community that further measures would be taken to remove the shadow of nuclear catastrophe hanging over the whole world. U Thant, United Nations Secretary-General at that time, voiced this sentiment when he expressed the hope that steps would be taken for the discontinuation of all nuclear test explosions for all time, prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons and the creation of denuclearized zones in different geographical areas of the world.

At the time of signing the PTBT, the Government of Pakistan expressed its strong hope that the Treaty would be followed soon by agreements to cease underground tests also, and to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. Unless these and other measures of nuclear disarmament were taken, Pakistan pointed out, the partial test-ban Treaty, although welcome in itself, might turn out to be of only illusory value in dissipating the fear of nuclear war.

When we look at the developments of the last quarter-century, we cannot escape the conclusion that most of the expectations raised at the time of the signature of the PTBT have not been fulfilled. The goal of a comprehensive test ban still seems to be beyond reach. Nuclear testing has not slackened since the signing of the PTBT, but on the contrary has been carried out more vigorously than before. The nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States are today much larger than they were in 1963. In this otherwise cheerless picture, the entry into force of the INF Treaty for the elimination of an entire category of nuclear weapons is a ray of hope. The world now awaits the early conclusion of an agreement between the super-Powers for the promised 50 per cent reduction in their strategic offensive weapons. The effect of any such quantitative cuts would, however, be negated if the arms race were carried into outer space or efforts were made to offset these reductions by qualitative improvements in nuclear weaponry.

The nuclear arms race today derives its momentum, in very large measure, from efforts aimed at the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, which in turn depends on a continuation of nuclear tests. If nuclear testing is halted, a key link in the nuclear arms race will have been broken. A comprehensive test ban would thus be the most important step from the point of view of halting the qualitative development of nuclear weapons. It would also serve as a most effective check on the horizontal proliferation of these weapons. For both these reasons, firstly by slowing down the race for new and more sophisticated types of nuclear weapons and secondly by strengthening the non-proliferation régime, a comprehensive test ban would constitute a major step towards nuclear disarmament.

A CTBT is an indispensable measure for slowing, halting and reversing the arms race. It is also a realistic possibility, if the political will exists.



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There are today no longer any technical obstacles to a CTBT. Verification issues can no longer be used to postpone these negotiations. In the opinion of experts, nuclear explosions can be identified and detected down to a yield of 1 kiloton. This would exclude the continuation of clandestine militarily significant tests required for the development of new weapon designs, new generations of nuclear weapons and exotic weapons, which today is the main aim of nuclear testing.

My delegation has little reason to believe that the ongoing step-by-step negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear testing will bring the goal of a comprehensive test ban any nearer. On the contrary, these talks could delay a test ban even further. The 150-kiloton yield threshold laid down in the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty is high enough to permit almost all the tests needed for the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. New techniques are fully adequate to verify tests of much lower yield. The ratification of these treaties, therefore, which is to be achieved in the first stage of the bilateral United States-Soviet negotiations, will have no significant impact in restricting the nuclear weapon programmes of the parties, and will not meet the expectations of the international community. Similarly, a reduction in the number and yield of underground nuclear tests which does not curb the qualitative development of nuclear weapons and is not concluded in the context of a comprehensive test ban within a short period would be seen as an attempt to legitimize nuclear testing for a long time to come rather than as a meaningful step towards a comprehensive ban.

Any further delay in the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban would be harmful to the cause of disarmament, and is fraught with the danger of weakening the non-proliferation régime. Multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty must commence without delay in this Conference. Last April, the Group of 21 made a constructive proposal contained in document CD/829 for the mandate of an ad hoc committee to be established under item 1. This proposal remains on the table. It reflects a spirit of give-and-take and is further proof of the flexibility of our Group in this matter. Unfortunately, this spirit has not been reciprocated so far by the Western Group.

Last month, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the non-proliferation Treaty, several delegations emphasized its importance. Pakistan's commitment to non-proliferation is of long standing. It has been firm and unwavering. In his address to the seventeenth session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1962, the then President of Pakistan warned of the "clear and present danger of the spread of nuclear weapons" and underlined that unless the United Nations took effective and urgent action against the dissemination of nuclear weapons, the race in nuclear arms was bound to overtake other parts of the world in the immediate future. This imminent peril, he said, demanded that the General Assembly give urgent consideration to the conclusion of a treaty to outlaw the further spread of nuclear weapons.

Despite the fact that the non-proliferation Treaty is unequal and discriminatory, we voted in favour of the 1968 General Assembly resolution commending it. We have fully endorsed its objectives. We have observed the

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central obligation of the Treaty, contained in article II. We are convinced that the spread of nuclear weapons to more than the present five nuclear-weapon States will make our world even more insecure. We would therefore like to see the present non-proliferation régime preserved and strengthened. The credibility of the non-proliferation Treaty would be increased if the nuclear-weapon States faithfully lived up to the commitments made by them in the Treaty regarding a comprehensive test ban, nuclear disarmament and co-operation with the non-nuclear-weapon States in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

The NPT is, however, only one component of an effective non-proliferation régime. A viable, durable and comprehensive non-proliferation régime requires other measures, at the global and regional level, to allay the security concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States, and assurances that impediments will not be placed in the path of their peaceful nuclear energy programmes. In his statement to the twenty-third session of the General Assembly in 1968, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan said:

"It has been obvious - and the point has been acknowledged by the prime authors of the instrument - that the Treaty is but the first step towards the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. By itself, its strength and durability will be reduced if it is not supplemented by other measures which are equally integral to the process of achieving a non-proliferation régime."

Pakistan has been consistent in its endeavours to achieve the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime by additional measures, such as the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world, assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and promotion of co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

We welcome the steps taken by countries of Latin America and the South Pacific for keeping their regions free of nuclear weapons, and hope that the nuclear-weapon States concerned will at an early date undertake the legal commitments necessary for respecting the nuclear-weapon-free status of those regions. We also warmly commend the steps taken by Argentina and Brazil bilaterally to protect their region from the risk of the introduction of nuclear weapons and promote an atmosphere of growing mutual trust in the nuclear field. They have set an example which deserves to be emulated in other parts of the world.

In South Asia, Pakistan has been making unremitting efforts to keep the region free of nuclear weapons and promote mutual confidence among the countries of the area about each other's nuclear programmes. Nuclear proliferation concerns in South Asia are born of a history of regional tensions and conflict. They feed upon mutual suspicions about nuclear programmes. Only a regional approach can therefore effectively address this problem. Pakistan has adopted this approach.

All the States of South Asia have at the highest level declared their intention not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons. What is now required is to convert these unilateral declarations into binding legal obligations. We

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have made a number of proposals in this regard. We remain ready to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty simultaneously with India; to accept full-scope safeguards on our nuclear programme simultaneously with India; to conclude a bilateral agreement with India for the mutual inspection of each other's nuclear facilities; to make a joint declaration with India renouncing nuclear weapons; and to enter into a bilateral nuclear test-ban treaty with India.

We are prepared to accept any equitable and non-discriminatory agreement, with effective verification arrangements, that would commit the countries of the region in a legally binding manner not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons. Last year, we proposed that in order to explore the possibility of such an agreement, a conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia should be convened under United Nations auspices with the participation of States in the region and other interested States.

In 1974, following the Indian nuclear explosion, Pakistan took the initiative of proposing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This proposal has received the endorsement in principle of the United Nations General Assembly in each of its annual sessions held since then, and enjoys the ever-increasing support of the Member States of the United Nations. South Asia constitutes a distinct region in geopolitical and historical terms, and States situated in the area have declared unilaterally that they will not produce or acquire nuclear weapons. The necessary conditions exist, therefore, for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

We welcome the growing recognition of the regional dimensions of the nuclear problem in South Asia and the increased support that the idea of a regional solution has found recently. Meanwhile, our proposals for keeping the area free from nuclear weapons remain on the table.

An effective non-proliferation régime requires furthermore that the security concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States be allayed. The present unilateral declarations made by four of the five nuclear-weapon States on refraining from the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States are riddled with conditions, qualifications and exceptions and are hardly calculated to enhance the sense of security of States which have voluntarily and unconditionally renounced the nuclear weapon option. The impasse that the Conference on Disarmament has reached on this issue can only be regretted.

Less than two months ago, the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament came to a close. For four weeks, the nations of the world deliberated upon issues affecting not only their individual security and survival but also the threat of nuclear annihilation that hangs over the entire planet. Delegation after delegation underlined the close relationship between disarmament, development and security and urged a reinvigoration of the multilateral disarmament process. The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral negotiating forum of the international community, must heed this call. We must address our agenda with renewed resolve and a heightened sense of urgency. Given the political will and a constructive approach on the part of all its members, there is no reason why the Conference cannot fulfil the role that is expected of it.

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The inability of SSOD-III to adopt a concluding document must naturally be a matter of disappointment. Yet the prolonged debate and intensive negotiations which took place on the draft presented by the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole were not in vain. While bringing to the fore the divergences on certain vital questions, these discussions also revealed the existence of agreement on many important issues and an emerging consensus on others.

These gains, however unspectacular, were real. It is for us now to preserve these gains and build upon them. Already in this Conference references have been made to the tacit consensus embodied in parts of the draft concluding document. It would like in particular to mention the statement of Ambassador Kostov of Bulgaria last week, in which he noted that the emerging consensus language of the document could be used as a starting-point for further action in disarmament.

The Conference itself acted on the basis of this language when it decided to re-establish the Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament on 19 July. As the President of the Conference for the month of July, Ambassador Teja of India, noted in his statements on 12, 14 and 19 July, the mandate of the Committee reproduces language contained in the draft concluding document. We will no doubt hear more about the document in the weeks and months to come, especially at the forthcoming regular session of the United Nations General Assembly, when the follow-up to SSOD-III will be taken in hand.

SSOD-III also indicated a growing convergence on an expanded multilateral disarmament agenda for the coming years and on the need for a multidimensional approach to these issues, with simultaneous movement on a broad front, including collateral steps. We are confident that these trends will have a positive effect on the disarmament process.

The question of the application of new technologies to the development of new weapons and weapons systems will figure increasingly in disarmament work. Last month, a combination of high-technology weaponry and miscalculation had tragic results for the innocent passengers on a civilian airliner. It is not difficult to imagine a situation in which the consequences of human error, miscalculation or accident in the use of high-technology equipment could be catastrophic for the whole world. The placing of restraints on research and development directed at the development of new weapons is already overdue, and should be seriously addressed.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Is there any other member who would like to take the floor at this stage? I recognize the distinguished Ambassador of Venezuela.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): As you know, Venezuela is one of the countries which, together with Mexico, Peru, Indonesia, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka, has been promoting an initiative for amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty in order to convert it into a

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comprehensive test-ban treaty. Accordingly, Venezuela and the other countries I have mentioned have sponsored in the United Nations General Assembly the various draft resolutions which the Assembly has considered, and which have been receiving ever-growing support, with the result that the most recent, resolution 42/26, was adopted with only the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union voting against. Venezuela continues to be part of this initiative, and supports and shares in it fully.

The members of the Conference on Disarmament will no doubt have noticed that Venezuela is not among the countries which signed the letter appearing in document CD/852, which was distributed this morning, and which was referred to expressly this morning by the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles. The reason for which my signature does not appear together with those of the other distinguished representatives, namely the representatives of Mexico, Peru, Indonesia, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka, has nothing to do with the substance of the initiative, which, as I have said, has Venezuela's enthusiastic support. The fact that Venezuela has not signed the letter originates instead in matters of form, since the Government of Venezuela, in view of the importance and implications of this issue, and bearing in mind the rank of the addressees, felt that the Minister for Foreign Affairs himself should sign and send the letter to the Foreign Ministers of the three depositary States. Accordingly, on 4 August, the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the partial nuclear test ban Treaty, Dr. Germán Nava Carrillo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, sent the following letter to the Foreign Ministers, that is to say the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Foreign Affairs:

"Sir,

"In my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of a State party to the Treaty partially banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, I am addressing the present communication to you in your capacity as Secretary of State of one of the depositary Governments of the Treaty. Identical communications have been sent to the other depositary Governments.

"In accordance with article II of the Treaty and resolution 42/26 B of the United Nations General Assembly I formally submit the amendment proposal on behalf of my Government for consideration at a conference of the States parties to the Treaty convened for that purpose. In that regard, I would be grateful if, in accordance with article II of the Treaty, you would circulate copies of the proposed amendment to all the parties and make the necessary arrangements to convene the conference as soon as a third of the States parties so request.

"I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

"(Signed)

Germán Nava Carrillo  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Venezuela"

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The text of this communication corresponds in substance to that appearing in document CD/852, and differs only in the matters of form to which I referred.

I considered it necessary to make this clarification in order to place on record the fact that the Government of Venezuela remains identified with the proposal for conversion of the partial nuclear test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, and through him his Government, as the representative of Peru has done, for its prompt and effective response to the Six Nations' initiative. We trust that the other two depositary countries will also take up the proposal in the same speedy and efficient way as the Government of the Soviet Union.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our hope that a growing number of countries will endorse this initiative, so as to gather together as quickly as possible the two thirds of the parties to the Treaty required in order to proceed to convening the conference.

In due course my delegation will forward to the Secretary-General of the Conference the text of the communication sent by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela to the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom so that it too can be reproduced as an official document of the Conference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Venezuela for his statement. I recognize the Ambassador of the Soviet Union.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): First of all I would like to thank the distinguished representatives of Peru and Venezuela for the appreciation they expressed to the Soviet Government in connection with the actions it has taken as depositary of the Moscow Treaty. I would also like to draw attention to the fact that it was stated in the interpretation of the statement by the distinguished representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Taylhardat, that the Soviet Union voted against resolution 42/26 B. This, of course, must be a technical error: the Soviet Union voted in favour of the resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Soviet Union for his statement and I give the floor to the Ambassador of Venezuela.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): I apologize to the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union. I believe that as a result of a mental slip I referred to the Soviet Union. The other country that voted against was France. My apologies again to the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union.

The PRESIDENT: Is there any other member who would like to take the floor at this stage? I give the floor to the Ambassador of Australia.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Mr. President, I congratulate you for the way in which you are conducting the Conference in this month of your presidency. I have the intention of making a statement on another occasion on the issue of nuclear testing, but I have to take the floor this morning to note that a couple of speeches have suggested that this Conference is confronted with Western intransigence on the issue of item 1 of our agenda. Australia is a Western State, and I must reject that charge. My delegation has supported the mandate given in document CD/521 since June 1984, and it has always stood ready to discuss that mandate with others. This charge of intransigence is not in accord with the known facts, and in any case it is an empty charge, by definition, in a Conference which must work on the basis of consensus.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Australia for his statement and his congratulations to the Chair.

As agreed by the Conference, we shall hold, on Thursday next, immediately after the plenary meeting, an informal meeting of the Conference devoted to the consideration of all aspects of its improved and effective functioning, including the two reports submitted by the Group of Seven in documents CD/WP.286 and CD/WP.341, as well as the future consideration of this subject by the Conference.

Since there is no other business for today, I now intend adjourning this meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will take place on Thursday 11 August at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.