

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 23 August 1988, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. Wisber Loeis

(Indonesia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 476th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work the Conference starts today its consideration of items 6 and 7, "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", and "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons". 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 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Canada. In accordance with the decision taken by the Conference at its 465th plenary meeting, I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ambassador Ri Tcheul.

Mr. RI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (translated from French): Mr. President, first of all I would like to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for this month, and on your savoir-faire and rich experience with which you are guiding our work. I should also like to express my profound gratitude to the distinguished representatives for having shown support for the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which wishes to contribute to general and complete disarmament, so that it could participate in this august Assembly.

Since its territory and people have been divided for over 40 years, and it has still not been able to eliminate the danger of war, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea aspires no less ardently than anyone to the reduction of tension in the international situation as a whole and is keenly interested in disarmament. The solution of the crucial problem of disarmament, and particularly nuclear disarmament, depends entirely on the position taken by the nuclear-weapon States. The appearance of nuclear armaments and the history of their development also show that it is difficult to expect nuclear disarmament without more active efforts from the non-nuclear-weapon States. As far as nuclear disarmament is concerned, in the light of the present global international situation, which is showing indications of détente, there is no justification for the continued existence of nuclear weapons deployed against States that do not possess them, or against regions demanding the creation of denuclearized zones. No complex questions, no need for a long period to dismantle nuclear weapons aimed at those who have none.

My Government long ago proclaimed the North above the demarcation line in the Korean peninsula as a nuclearized zone. More than 1,000 nuclear weapons currently deployed in South Korea and directed against us are a basic source of the threat of a nuclear war breaking out in that region. The presence of American troops in South Korea, more than 40,000 of them, a number which is continuously increasing instead of falling off, the joint South Korean-United States large-scale military manoeuvres which are taking place constantly, involving an enormous amount of weaponry and several hundreds of thousands of soldiers, threaten us and worry us constantly. Confrontation and armed conflict in the Korean peninsula will profit no one.

(Mr. Ri, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

If a new conflagration breaks out in Korea, we will have nothing to gain, the United States will not be safe and sound and South Korea will not feel at ease either. We must choose the route that enables all of us to avoid being victims. My Government considers that our side and the United States, which are responsible respectively for détente and peace in Korea, must sit down at the same table as soon as possible. In this regard, the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly of my country proposed on 20 July the initiation of parliamentary talks between the Supreme People's Assembly and the American Congress.

Some people say that the presence of nuclear weapons in the south of Korea is intended to prevent what they call the threat from the north, but we think that they are fully aware that we will not do as they say we would. Our people does not want another war to break out, our territory to be reduced to ashes and our nation afflicted by horrors. We have proposed that these inter-parliamentary talks should be held in New York, in Pyongyang or in a third country, which would make it possible to understand each other better, to make an effective contribution to détente in the Korean peninsula and to promote dialogue between the north and the south of Korea for reunification. We would like to say to the Americans that the war of yesterday against each other does not prevent them from sitting down today at the same table, and that there is no reason why the current hostile relations cannot be improved tomorrow. Is it not true that in the 1950s, we had the experience of stopping the flames of war through negotiations?

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has taken on itself the duty of converting the Korean peninsula into a denuclearized zone of peace and trying actively to extend it throughout north-east Asia, and is taking realistic measures. In order to create a climate that is favourable to the abolition of nuclear weapons and the withdrawal of foreign forces, we have presented a proposal for stage-by-stage reciprocal reductions in armed forces, and have taken the initiative of holding multinational disarmament negotiations for its application. Following the proposal, which was put forward last year, my Government unilaterally reduced its troops by 100,000 men. This year, we have proposed the holding of a joint North-South conference, and in particular, on 20 July, the Supreme People's Assembly of my country took the initiative of meeting in joint conference with its South Korean counterpart, considering it necessary to find a solution to the problem of non-aggression between the North and the South, because of the tension that prevails on Korean soil. The draft joint declaration on non-aggression between North and South states: first, in no case shall either of the two parties resort to force of arms against the other. Second, the two parties shall resolve the differences and disputes between them through dialogue and negotiation. Third, neither of the two parties shall participate in aggression or acts of foreign armed intervention against the other party. Fourth, the non-aggression line shall be the current military demarcation line. Fifth, the two parties shall effect a phased reduction of their armed forces and simultaneously take measures to withdraw stage by stage foreign troops and their nuclear arms based within the Korean peninsula. Sixth, they shall make the present demilitarized zone a buffer zone, shall endeavour to avoid armed conflicts and disputes in that zone and, by way of a guarantee, shall have a neutral-nation inspection force stationed there, etc. However, there has been no response yet to all our efforts, as there should have been, and consequently the situation has not

(Mr. Ri, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

changed at all. Unilateral measures, by their nature, are not sufficient to produce peace, security and disarmament. We feel that the necessary attention should be drawn to the fact that the United States is continuing to aggravate tension in the Korean peninsula while pursuing détente in other parts of the world.

The third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and this Conference, prove that disarmament is in no case a problem of method but one of principle, and that it concerns the political will of each country. Today, when the third special session has not produced results, everyone is focusing on the negotiations in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and hoping that remarkable success will be made in the field of general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. My delegation, which greatly appreciates various peace and nuclear disarmament initiatives taken by the socialist countries and the non-aligned countries, would like to see the earliest possible conclusion of the agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic arms as a follow-up to the ratification of the INF Treaty, which has been welcomed as the first step forward towards nuclear disarmament.

The anti-nuclear struggle of the non-nuclear-weapon States to bring about general and complete disarmament may be seen in the movement to create zones of peace and denuclearized zones, which is gaining ground internationally every day. In these circumstances, my delegation feels that it is necessary to take measures to promote and co-ordinate in a unified fashion the process of creating denuclearized zones throughout the world. In particular, primary attention should be given to the denuclearization of regions of front-line deployment of those nuclear forces which present the greatest risk of causing a nuclear war, such as tactical and battlefield nuclear weapons. International measures should be taken to put a stop to the stationing of the armed forces of the nuclear-weapon States, the installation of nuclear bases and the delivery of all kinds of nuclear weapons in countries that have no nuclear weapons.

The Governments and peoples of all countries want to see the convention banning chemical weapons, which has been the subject of discussion for several years in the Conference on Disarmament, concluded this year. Our people, which was the first victim of chemical weapons in the world after the Second World War, regards the conclusion of the convention as a problem that is ripe for solution, and impatiently expects from this Conference a legal instrument that will make it possible to put an end once and for all to the horror of chemical warfare on Earth.

The tasks to be carried out by the Conference on Disarmament, such as the reduction of conventional weapons, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the drafting of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, etc., are both important and responsible tasks. My delegation will make every effort and co-operate to ensure that the Conference makes real progress.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Canada, Ambassador Marchand.

Mr. MARCHAND (Canada) (translated from French): My statement today will deal primarily with the first item on the Conference's agenda, the fundamental question of the prohibition of nuclear tests, and in particular the work of the Group of Scientific Experts on the seismic monitoring of a future treaty. Before turning to the main subject of my statement, I would like on behalf of my Government to introduce as an official document of the Conference the text of a recent statement made by the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Clark, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to which Canada was one of the first countries to accede. As Mr. Clark stated, the non-proliferation Treaty "is an instrument of major importance in that it provides for legally binding commitments to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and facilitates international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also sets out a guiding framework for the negotiated reduction of nuclear arsenals". Canada attaches particular importance to the need for all States to become full parties to this instrument. Mr. Clark also expressed his satisfaction at the noteworthy progress recorded in the American-Soviet negotiations on nuclear arms reduction, in conformity with the objectives set out in the disarmament provisions of the non-proliferation Treaty.

I have already had occasion to stress the importance that Canada attaches to a nuclear test ban. This fundamental goal was reiterated by Mr. Clark in his statement on 13 June at the third special session on disarmament. The convergence of views around that goal during the last few days of the session gave rise to the hope that there would soon be a consensus that work should begin in an ad hoc committee of the Conference. It is therefore all the more disappointing that, back in Geneva, we have not yet managed to agree on the mandate for such a committee. It is not too late for us to unite our efforts to that end. We have by no means exhausted the possibilities of reaching agreement on a mandate. In the view of my delegation, the compromise proposed by Ambassador Vejvoda, which has just been retabled, provides an excellent starting-point.

The Government of Canada has taken due note of the recent initiative taken by five countries aimed at converting the Treaty limiting nuclear tests into a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests in all environments. As it subscribes fully to the goal of achieving a comprehensive test ban as soon as possible, the Government of Canada well understands the motives underlying this initiative. It seems to us undeniable, however, that there is very little chance that this initiative will achieve the desired result. Canada continues to hold the opinion that direct negotiations are the only practical means of achieving a complete and genuinely verifiable ban on nuclear tests.

Despite the fact that we are still seeking ways and means of setting up a subsidiary body for our work on a nuclear test ban, there are some glimmers of hope. The negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of nuclear tests are moving forward. The first stage in these negotiations on the improvement of verification techniques should shortly lead to the ratification of the Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests and the Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes. The second phase of the negotiations will then focus on limitations relating to the yield and number of tests. This is admittedly insufficient. But it would be a mistake to deny the importance of these negotiations. The

(Mr. Marchand, Canada)

forthcoming ratification of the two treaties just mentioned represents a useful first step forward towards the widely shared goal of a nuclear test-ban treaty.

It is also encouraging to note from the latest report on the work of the Group of Scientific Experts, presented by its Chairman, Mr. Dahlman, that progress, slow and painful, perhaps, but none the less real and tangible progress, has been achieved towards the objective of a global network of seismic stations for the verification of a future treaty prohibiting nuclear tests. At its last meeting, the Group of Scientific Experts elaborated on the conceptual model of a modern international system of seismic data exchange and reached general agreement on the operating standards for a global system. The Canadian experts have indicated to us, however, that a number of problems still remain unresolved as to the technical measures required to institute these norms. The group has decided to conduct preparatory experiments in order to test some of the proposed functions for the data centres, so that the large-scale level II data exchange experiment is now under way. The results of these preparatory experiments will enable the Group to refine the design of the seismic data exchange system which is to be negotiated and set up under a treaty. Canada attaches great importance to this work, and lends its full encouragement to it. The Group has asked Mr. Peter Basham of Canada to act as principal co-ordinator for the planning and conduct of the large-scale experiment, and the Canadian authorities are ready to lend him every support in the performance of this important task.

It is a pleasure for me to announce that, as an additional contribution to this exercise, Canada is to host a technical workshop on seismic data exchange for the verification of a nuclear test ban. This workshop, which is primarily intended for experts, will be held at Yellowknife in the Canadian Far North in September 1989. The workshop will mark the official opening of the Yellowknife modernized seismic centre, and will give participants an opportunity to assess this facility as a prototype of the kind of modern station envisaged for the future seismic verification network. The workshop will also offer the participants an opportunity to evaluate the progress achieved and discuss the problems to be resolved, midway through the large-scale experiment on data exchange. Further details on the dates, the workshop programme and the administrative arrangements will be provided in due course.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Canada for his statement. Does any other member wish to take the floor at this stage? I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Friedersdorf.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): We are all familiar with the recent history of the Korean peninsula regarding the naked aggression and military attacks on South Korea by communist North Korea, and the United Nations response involving the assistance of the United States. The attack on the United States today by the communist North Korea representative is highly offensive and repugnant to my delegation. The United States will continue to support its allies around the world when threatened by aggressors. The United States presence on the Korean peninsula is a result of the Korean war provoked by North Korea.

The PRESIDENT: The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has asked for the floor. I give him the floor.

Mr. HAN (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): With the permission of my Ambassador, his deputy is speaking. Our statement was not intended to attack anybody. We just noted the urgency and importance of this moment in our peninsula, in our region and the world. We just referred to the realities of the peninsula. Now I have heard some history about the Korean peninsula. I have many things to say, but I will refrain this time because this is not the forum to make clear who is responsible for the region's problems. But history and time will decide.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I see none.

I should like to draw members' attention to a request for participation from a non-member State of the Conference, namely Senegal. The relevant letter was distributed in the delegations' boxes last Friday afternoon. The representative of Senegal has expressed the wish to speak at our next plenary meeting on Thursday, 25 August. If no objection is raised with the secretariat before that meeting, I propose to take up this matter for decision at the beginning of the plenary meeting so that the representative of Senegal may address the Conference on that date.

Before I adjourn this plenary meeting, I have two short announcements to make. The Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons will hold its next meeting, originally scheduled for Friday afternoon, immediately after our next plenary meeting on Thursday, 25 August. The Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons has scheduled a meeting for Friday, 26 August to be held in room VII at 3 p.m.

I have no other business for today, and I now intend to adjourn this meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 25 August at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.