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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FORTIETH MEETING
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 10 July 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. P. VOUTOV

(Bulgaria)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. A. BENSMAIL

Argentina: Mr. A. DUMONT
Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD
Mr. G.N. MOLteni

Australia: Sir James PLIMSOLL
Mr. A. BEHM

Belgium: Mr. P. BERG
Mr. G. VAN DUYSSE

Brazil: Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA
Mr. S. DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. P. VOUTOV
Mr. I. SOTIROV
Mr. C. HALACHEV
Mr. P. KAMENOV

Burma: U SAW HLAING
U NGWE WIN

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

Cuba: Mrs. V.B. JACKIEWICH

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. RŮŽEK^{OV}
Mr. V. TYLNER
Mr. J. JIRŮSEK^{OV}

Egypt: Mr. O. EL-SHAFFI
Mr. M. EL-BARADEI
Mr. N. FAHMY

Ethiopia: Mr. G. ALULA

France: Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HERDER
Mr. W. KOETTER
Mr. H. GRACZYNSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. G. PFEIFFER
Mr. H. MULLER

Hungary: Mr. M. DOMOKOS
Mr. C. GYORFFY
Mr. A. LAKATOS

India: Mr. C.R. GHAREKHAN
Mr. S.T. DEVARE

Indonesia: Mr. SURYONO DARUSMAN
Mr. I.M. DAMANIK

Iran: Mr. D. AIERI

Italy: Mr. V.C. MONTEZEMOLO
Mr. M. MORENO
Mr. C. FRATESCHI
Mr. FOLCO DE LUCA

Japan: Mr. M. OGISO
Mr. T. IWANAMI
Mr. R. ISHII

Kenya: Mr. S. SHITEMI
Mr. A. JET ODENDO

Mexico: Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES
Miss A. CABRERA

Mongolia: Mr. S. DAVAA

Morocco: Mr. S.M. RAHHALI
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. A.J. MEERBURG

Nigeria: Mr. O. ADENIJI
Mr. T.O. OLUMOKO.

Pakistan:

Peru: Mr. J. AURICH MONTERO

Poland: Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. H. PAC
Mr. M. KRUCZYK

Romania: Mr. L. TOADER

Sri Lanka: Mr. I.B. FONSEKA

Sweden: Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. S. STROMBACK

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. Y.K. NAZARKIN
Mr. N.V. PESTEREV
Mr. A.I. TIOURENKOV
Mr. M.G. ANTIUKHIN
Mr. A.M. VAVILOV
Mr. N.P. SMIDOVICH
Mr. E. ZAITSEV

United Kingdom: Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES
Mr. N.H. MARSHALL
Mr. P.M.W. FRANCIS
Mr. G.C. FORD

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER

Mr. M. SANCHES

Mr. B. MIKULAK

Mr. D. KOELEMAY

Mr. T. BARTHELEMY

Mr. W. DUNLOP

Mr. A. RADZIANKO

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT

Mrs. R.L. DE NECER

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. E. MULONGANDUSU

Secretary:

Mr. RIKHI JAIPAL

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the 40th plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Committee starts today the consideration of item 4 of the programme of work: "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons".

In connexion with this item, may I draw the attention of the Committee to documents CD/31 and CD/32, containing an "Agreed joint US-USSR proposal on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons", which are being circulated in the official and working languages at present used by the Committee.

Mr. ISRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): At the meeting between L.I. Brezhnev, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and J. Carter, the President of the United States which took place from 15 to 18 June this year, the leaders of the USSR and the United States confirmed with satisfaction the achievement of bilateral agreement on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. Today our agreed joint proposal is being presented to the Committee on Disarmament for its further consideration and discussion.

We hope this step, which is a specific contribution by the two countries to the erection of barriers against the further spread of the arms race, will receive due recognition both within and outside the Committee.

The document which has been distributed in the Committee is aimed at preventing the emergence of one of the types of weapons of mass destruction -- the radiological weapon -- which, should it be developed and used, could cause mass destruction of human life and have extremely dangerous consequences for mankind.

Experts maintain that the possibility of the development of radiological weapons is quite real. They have in mind possible varieties of these weapons such as bombs, shells, demolition charges and the like, which are designed to disseminate, by means of an explosion, the radioactive material they contain; special devices or equipment which disseminate radioactive material by a non-explosive method, for example, by dispersing it in the form of liquid or solid particles as well as the radioactive material itself with which such devices are filled.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

There is every reason to believe that the scale of the destruction wrought by radiological weapons would be similar to the scale of destruction caused by radioactive materials which are produced in nuclear explosions and bring about the radioactive contamination of the area.

The importance of preventing the emergence of this type of weapon of mass destruction is also connected with the fact that the rapid development of nuclear energy and technology in many countries of the world creates objective conditions for the large-scale proliferation of radioactive materials which, being what they are, may be used in radiological weapons. Such use of radiological materials may become technically accessible for a very large number of States.

As is known, the Soviet Union regards the prohibition of radiological weapons as a part of the solution to the problem of the comprehensive prohibition of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that the treaty prohibiting radiological weapons will constitute yet another important contribution to the limitation of the arms race, to saving mankind from the danger of the development and use of one of the possible new types of weapons of mass destruction. A major step forward will be taken to prevent the use of scientific and technological progress for the purpose of developing new types of weapons of mass destruction.

I should now like to comment on the principal provisions of the draft treaty.

When elaborating these provisions, the Soviet delegation endeavoured to have them worded in precise treaty language and, as far as possible, to put them in final form, which would undoubtedly facilitate further work on the text.

Paragraphs I, II and III define the scope and subject of the prohibition.

The obligations to be assumed by the parties to the treaty under these provisions would completely preclude the possibility of the deliberate use of any radioactive material, not produced by a nuclear explosive device, as a weapon of mass destruction.

In this connexion, paragraphs I and II are concerned with the obligation not to develop, produce, stockpile, otherwise acquire or possess, or use radiological weapons. The term "radiological weapon" covers any device and any radioactive material, other than nuclear explosive devices or material produced by them, which may be specifically designed for employment as a weapon of mass destruction acting by radiation.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In our view, the obligations assumed under paragraphs I and II completely preclude the possibility that parties to the treaty could make preparations to wage radiological war by developing in advance special devices, and expressly prohibit the employment of such devices to cause destruction, damage or injury.

On the other hand, in elaborating the provisions on the scope and subject of the prohibition, we were fully aware of the fact that, in view of the steadily increased scale of the practical activities of States entailing the use of radioactive materials in areas of activity not prohibited by this treaty, situations connected with a deliberate violation of the treaty could arise when it may be not evident whether this or that radioactive material used to cause destruction, damage or injury is or is not covered by the definition of radiological weapons.

The purpose of paragraph III is to prevent such deliberate use of radiological material which is not defined as a radiological weapon.

In concluding our explanations concerning paragraphs I, II and III, we should like to dwell on yet another important point.

Of course, as we are talking about radiological weapons, it is emphasized throughout that this treaty does not cover nuclear explosive devices and the radioactive material which is produced during their explosion, which means that the treaty does not deal with nuclear weapons. As is well known, the Soviet Union is in favour of the complete prohibition of all types of nuclear weapons and of beginning negotiations on this question. However, the treaty prohibiting radiological weapons has a framework of its own.

In drawing up the basic provisions of the treaty prohibiting radiological weapons which are being presented to the Committee on Disarmament, we took into account the fact that the activity prohibited under the treaty abuts very closely and along a broad front on the various multifaceted activities of States entailing the use of radioactive material for purposes not related to radiological weapons. Various aspects of this factual situation are emphasized by appropriate provisions of the treaty.

Paragraph IV imposes an obligation on the parties to the treaty not to assist, encourage, or induce any person, State, group of States or international organization to engage in any of the activities prohibited under paragraphs I and III.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Paragraph V emphasizes the right of the parties to the treaty to carry out, without hindrance, peaceful activities in a corresponding field.

Paragraph VI imposes an obligation on the parties to the treaty to take any necessary measures to prevent the loss and diversion of radioactive materials, and to prohibit any activities contrary to the treaty. Paragraph VII also provides that this treaty in no way affects the obligations assumed by States under a number of other international legal instruments.

Paragraph VIII deals with verification questions. It reflects the principle that verification measures provided for in any agreement on arms limitation should correspond to the subject and scope of the prohibition. The experience acquired with the agreements in force in the field of the limitation of the arms race and of disarmament was made use of in the preparation of this provision. Members of the Committee who took part in the elaboration of those agreements will, of course, immediately notice this. The provision provides for the establishment of a consultative committee of experts to resolve questions regarding compliance with obligations under the treaty, and states the conditions for making findings of fact should any doubts arise on questions of compliance with the provisions of the treaty and on similar matters.

In drawing up the basic provisions of the treaty we proceeded from the need to ensure its reliability, and to assure all parties to it that this instrument will be a viable and effective means of arms limitation. It was precisely in this spirit that we drafted the wording dealing with the introduction of amendments to the treaty and the convening of review conferences of the States parties to the treaty.

In concluding my statement, I would like to note that the agreed joint proposal which we are submitting deals with the obligation not to develop, produce stockpile, otherwise acquire or possess, or use radiological weapons. In this connexion, the Soviet Union understands that no obligations undertaken by States in the projected treaty will be interpreted as covering the use of radioactive materials or any sources of radiation except such uses as the parties to the treaty have undertaken not to engage in pursuant to the provisions of the treaty.

In submitting this document, the Soviet delegation expresses the hope that it will command the interest and serious attention of all members of the Committee. The Soviet delegation is aware that members of the Committee may have various

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

questions to raise and that they will require to co-ordinate their respective positions with their Governments, but we nevertheless believe that as the Committee must take practical steps towards limiting the arms race, we shall all take the necessary measures to ensure that the draft treaty prohibiting radiological weapons is submitted to the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly for consideration.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): Today the United States delegation is tabling a proposal on major elements of a treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons. A parallel proposal is being tabled by the delegation of the Soviet Union. We are presenting this joint initiative for consideration by all delegations with a view to the early conclusion of a multilateral treaty.

In so doing, we are living up to the commitment in the joint United States-USSR communiqué of 13 June this year which reads:

"President Carter and President Brezhnev were pleased to be able to confirm that bilateral agreement on major elements of a treaty banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons has been reached. An agreed joint proposal will be presented to the Committee on Disarmament this year."

Radiological weapons (or radioactive material weapons, as they have also been called) have long been identified as potential weapons capable of mass destruction. In 1948, a United Nations Commission identified as weapons of mass destruction:

"... atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above."

Nuclear explosive weapons have been the subject of a number of international arms control agreements, and further negotiations directed toward the control of such weapons are proceeding. Biological weapons have been prohibited by a multilateral treaty that entered into force some five years ago. A convention which banned the use of chemical weapons was signed in 1925, while efforts continue toward a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

The remaining category included in the United Nations definition of 1948 was radioactive material weapons. At that time, the amounts of highly radioactive materials in existence were small and, geographically, were confined to a few facilities. Nonetheless, it was recognized that, used as a weapon, these materials could cause mass destruction of human life. As we are all aware, in the succeeding years the accumulation of radioactive materials has proceeded at an accelerating rate, and such material is now to be found at many facilities throughout the world.

Consideration of the matter led my Government, in 1976, to suggest before the United Nations General Assembly that there appeared to be merit, in view of the continuing proliferation of radioactive materials, in seeking an international agreement covering radiological weapons.

The kind of specific activities that the treaty would prohibit would be, for example, the use of radioactive material from spent fuel rods of a reactor over an area to make it impassable or, in a populated area, to kill, harm or to force evacuation of the population. It would also prohibit the development, production, and stockpiling of devices specifically designed for such purposes.

In 1977, the United States and the Soviet Union initiated bilateral consideration of this problem. Subsequently, later in 1977, the two sides agreed to pursue a joint initiative to be presented in this Committee, leading to final elaboration of a comprehensive agreement banning radiological weapons. The United Nations General Assembly recently demonstrated its belief in the desirability of taking steps to head off any possible resort to this weapon of mass destruction. The Committee on Disarmament also expressed concern over the potential threat posed by radiological weapons by placing this subject on the agenda and programme of work for its 1979 session. We believe that the agreed joint proposal we are presenting today represents an adequate basis for the Committee on Disarmament to arrive at a final treaty text.

With respect to the text of the joint initiative, it should be said that the formulation of restraints on the employment of radioactive materials presented a major challenge in the bilateral negotiations, particularly as regards definition. This was because there are so many uses of these materials that in no way involve the inflicting of destruction, damage, or injury by means of the radiation produced

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

by the decay of such material. The agreed joint proposal that we are presenting deals with an undertaking not to develop, produce, stockpile, otherwise acquire or possess, or use radiological weapons. In this connexion, the United States would like to make clear its understanding that no obligations undertaken by States in the projected treaty will be interpreted as covering the use of radioactive materials or any sources of radiation except such uses as the parties to the treaty have undertaken not to engage in pursuant to the provisions of the treaty.

All nuclear explosive weapons, which produce radiation along with other destructive effects, constitute a category of weapons of mass destruction separate from radiological weapons, and are therefore not covered by the joint initiative. Progress in curbing such weapons through appropriate arms control arrangements is a priority objective of the United States Government. We are making every effort to advance that objective.

I would now like to summarize and comment on specific portions of the proposed elements themselves.

Paragraphs I and III contain the basic obligations of the proposed treaty. Paragraph I obligates parties not to develop, produce, stockpile, otherwise acquire or possess, or use radiological weapons. Paragraph III is a broad prohibition of the intentional dissemination of radioactive material not defined as a radiological weapon for the purpose of causing destruction, damage, or injury.

The definition of a radiological weapon is given in paragraph II; namely, 1. any device specifically designed to employ radioactive material by disseminating it to cause destruction, damage, or injury by means of the radiation produced by decay of such material, or 2. any radioactive material specifically designed for such use. As I mentioned before, nuclear explosive devices do not fall under this definition.

Paragraph IV would obligate parties not to assist, encourage, or induce other States, groups of States, or individuals to engage in the activities prohibited by paragraphs I and III.

Paragraph V makes clear that the treaty would not apply to any of the myriad uses of radiation from radioactive decay for peaceful purposes, and would not stand in the way of international co-operation in this regard.

Paragraph VI would require parties to take measures to prevent the loss or diversion of radioactive materials which might be used in radiological weapons.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

An essential and long-recognized requirement of any effective arms control or disarmament measure is that it must contain measures of verification adequate to the special nature of the weapons to be controlled in order to create the necessary confidence that it is being observed by all parties. The United States is satisfied that the verification provisions incorporated in this joint initiative meet the requirements of this particular treaty.

Paragraph VIII contains procedures proposed for dealing with problems that might arise in insuring compliance with the treaty. It sets forth the basic undertaking to consult and co-operate in solving any such problem. It provides for a Consultative Committee of Experts. It also specifies procedures for submitting complaints to the United Nations Security Council.

The remaining paragraphs deal with such matters as amendments, duration, entry into force, and so forth.

The United States is, of course, aware that many, if not all, countries may wish to transmit the text to their capitals and that discussions during this week will of necessity be of a preliminary nature. We hope, however, that Governments will be able to act quickly on this proposal so that the Committee will be in a position to complete its work as soon as possible, perhaps in time for consideration by the First Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): I propose to address briefly the third item in our schedule of work for the current session of the Committee, namely, "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons".

First, however, I should like to say how pleased I am to see you, Mr. Chairman, the representative of fraternal Bulgaria, presiding over our deliberations in this very crucial period of our work. I am confident that your profound experience and dedication to the cause of disarmament will greatly facilitate the achievement of the objectives which we all pursue.

I also take pleasure in associating my delegation with the warm words of welcome which have been addressed to Mr. Jaipal, the distinguished Secretary of the Committee and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

As you will agree, Mr. Chairman, the Committee is quite familiar with the subject under discussion and the reasons which led the Committee at the initiative of the Soviet delegation, to focus its attention on this issue. The overriding objective has been all along to erect an effective barrier to halt the technological arms race in the most sinister area -- weapons of mass destruction. The objective has also been to take practical and early measures before any breakthrough occurs in weapons technology, in fact before any research in that area can be undertaken at all.

That objective remains valid today when it is increasingly realized that world peace and security can be assured only on the basis of the principle of equality of the military potential and of equal security of all parties. The recognition of those fundamental principles has made possible the elaboration by the U.S.S.R and the United States of the second strategic arms limitation treaty -- SALT II.

I would even go so far as to say that the recognition of and respect for those principles is what can most significantly promote the timeless aspiration of man for a peaceful future in a disarming world, and for that ultimate and elusive goal of general and complete disarmament.

As it will be recalled, in the joint United States-Soviet Union Vienna communiqué, issued on the signature of the SALT II Treaty, the leaders of the two Powers stated that neither is striving and will not strive for military superiority, since that can only result in dangerous instability, generating higher levels of armaments with no benefit to the security of either side.

I believe that the message conveyed in that statement goes far beyond the mutual relationship of the two contracting parties. Indeed, I believe that we all in this Committee should reflect upon its full meaning and implications for our immediate work. The question of an international convention to outlaw the development, production and deployment of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems of such weapons is the logical next step toward halting the arms race, a step of universal concern underlined in paragraph 77 of the Final Document of the special session.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

We face a situation in which we are within reach of achieving the most humanitarian objective -- drafting a document which would decree once and for all that any scientific or technological breakthrough cannot be ever put to use for other than peaceful purposes, that it cannot be turned against mankind.

The elaboration of a universal treaty would provide a legal basis for the domestic legislation of States and would authorize action on an international level in case of proven or suspected activity contrary to its spirit and objectives.

Indeed, over the years we have devoted considerable attention to advancing prospects of such an agreement. In our work we had the benefit of expert advice. Scientific authority was invoked to warn the international community that we are indeed on the threshold of the development -- in the more or less distant future -- of new types of weapons of mass destruction. And yet little has been done to halt the inexorable sword of Damocles.

As we recall, there were many objections and reservations formulated against the proposal to reach an all-embracing, comprehensive agreement. For some delegations such an approach was much too comprehensive; others perceived it as an attempt to interfere with the freedom of scientific research. Yet others appeared incredulous that any additional weapons of mass annihilation would actually be developed, perhaps rightly believing that more than enough are now available. Then there was the inevitable argument -- what about the feasibility of effective verification and control?

Let me deal briefly with those objections.

There is certainly no doubt that the scope of the proposed international convention is broad and universal. But cannot we think of some equally broad and universal agreements in the history of international relations? Cannot we recall treaties that this Committee helped to negotiate whose scope, significance and possibilities of verification are similar to the one we are now examining? The 1971 Sea-Bed Treaty or the Environmental Modification Convention of 1977, to name just two. Are they not useful and effective

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

as armament prevention measures? While they concern environments subjected to extensive exploration and investigation, there are no complaints on record that they hamstrung the complete freedom of scientific exploration.

Now, what about proof of the feasibility of new types of weapons of mass destruction? Surely we must not delude ourselves that anyone well advanced in that area would willingly come and testify in this body. Secondly, the history of scientific research points unmistakably to the fact that all major scientific discoveries sooner or later find their way into military applications. Thirdly, waiting for tangible proof may take us to where we are right now -- deliberating over ways of dealing with chemical, nuclear or neutron weapons.

It may therefore be rightly suggested that a little prevention is better than a lot of cure. We reject the theory that the best time for action will come when and if specific types of weapons of mass destruction are proven feasible, when they get to the drawing board. That might be tragically late. Consequently, my delegation submits that the best time to act is now, and that the only way of getting about the task is to draft a comprehensive treaty which would effectively prevent any and all types of new weapons of mass destruction from ever getting to the design stage, let alone assembly line.

And, finally, let us look at the issue of control and verification. It was resolved fairly well in the above-mentioned agreements. It has been settled rather successfully in the SALT II Treaty, although admittedly there are people who would not be persuaded, not of that point. My delegation can think of no reason why an equally effective and satisfactory verification system should not be devised in the case of a comprehensive treaty banning the development, production and deployment of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems of such weapons.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

My delegation is not one to deny the legitimacy of justified doubt. But then, if we have such doubts about the scope, the reality of the danger or the feasibility of verification -- well, let us call a group of governmental experts, indeed, as suggested some time ago by the Soviet Union. Set up and working under the auspices of the Committee on Disarmament, they could dispassionately examine areas with a potential for the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. A report by such a panel would considerably facilitate and advance our deliberations in that area. Consequently, the Polish delegation fully supports the proposal to organize such a group of experts, and we are prepared to co-operate with such a group to the best of our ability.

Apart from my prepared statement I should like to express the satisfaction of the Polish delegation at the submission by the distinguished representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States of their joint proposal on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. This is an important arms limitation measure which has been awaited with anticipation. Coming in the wake of the SALT II agreement, it is a significant testimony of the determination of the two negotiating parties to pursue and conclude successfully agreements which they have been seeking in other areas.

We are also hopeful that this welcome agreement represents a valid manifestation of ability and willingness to seek a comprehensive treaty.

My delegation will want to study that document carefully, and wishes to reserve its right to comment on it in some detail at an appropriate time.

We believe that the Committee on Disarmament will find the necessary time and an appropriate method for a further -- and in this case multilateral -- consideration of the document so that it can be presented in a treaty form to the forthcoming session of the General Assembly with a recommendation for its approval.

Mr. DOMOKOS (Hungary): In my present statement I would like to explain my delegation's views and opinion on agenda item 5, that is, on the question of the prohibition of the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

Before doing so I would like also to take this opportunity to extend a hearty welcome to Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to express my confidence that the Committee on Disarmament will profit considerably from his valuable activities as the Secretary of the Committee and his vast experience in multilateral diplomacy.

This subject has been repeatedly and widely discussed in its different aspects in this Committee. Several statements have proved convincingly that the increasing pace of scientific and technological progress opens up more and more possibilities for the development of new generations of weapons of mass destruction, fuelling and giving new dimensions to the arms race. Progress in science and technology — we hope — will continue at an increasing pace, since it helps mankind to solve its outstanding problems. At the same time a disarmament negotiating body such as ours should remain on the alert to prevent the undesirable side-effects of this progress, namely, to prevent the achievements of science and technology from being used for military purposes and resulting in a qualitatively new phase of the technological arms race.

The Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament and the relevant resolutions of the thirty-second and thirty-third sessions of the General Assembly — although in different wording — urged our Committee to take effective measures to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction, and to continue negotiations with a view to agreeing on the text of an agreement prohibiting the development and production of such weapons.

There are basically two different approaches to the question of how the Committee should proceed with the consideration of this subject, which may be well known to the delegations here.

As regards the approach supported mainly by the Western delegations in our Committee, my delegation believes that merely to pursue the examination of the subject and to prepare specific agreements on individual types of weapons that may be identified directly implies that the Committee will be constantly lagging behind events and the results achieved in the military field with an ever-increasing time gap. In order to fulfil the task of preventing the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction, a broader approach is required, namely, the elaboration of a comprehensive ban on the development and production of such weapons which would constitute a legal barrier to the flow of technological achievements into the field of military applications.

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

This position of ours does not, however, in any way mean that my delegation would attach little importance to working out specific agreements on particular types of weapons which may be identified. That we view as the concrete application of a comprehensive ban. It was in this spirit that the Hungarian delegation prepared and presented to the CCD working paper CCD/575 on infrasonic weapons last August, which was meant to prove that development of such weapons is within reach in terms of technology.

Many delegations in this Committee agree with this comprehensive approach which was not only advocated in statements but backed by concrete initiatives and proposals. Let me mention only the latest instances: document CCD/511/Rev.1, a draft convention on the subject, or CCD/514, a working paper on the definition of new types of weapons of mass destruction, both submitted by the delegation of the USSR, together with CCD/564, a draft resolution aimed at establishing an ad hoc group of governmental experts to consider the question of possible areas of the development of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. A draft convention was submitted by the socialist delegations in document CCD/559 on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons. All these are valid proposals and initiatives awaiting urgent negotiations in this Committee, and their aim is to facilitate effective steps and tangible progress in preventing the emergence of new generations of weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation is of the opinion that the Committee should conduct concrete negotiations as called for in resolution 33/66B of the General Assembly "with a view to agreeing on the text of an agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons". At the same time, the Committee should give fresh consideration to a recent proposal contained in document CCD/564 for the establishment of an ad hoc group of qualified governmental experts. Such a group could also be entrusted with the task of further refining the definition of new types of weapons of mass destruction and their classification criteria, as well as keeping under continuous surveillance possible areas of development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, and would make recommendations to the Committee. The work of such a group could effectively contribute to greater understanding on various aspects of this complex issue, and promote the solution of present differences.

(Mr. Domokos, Hungary)

There is another subject I should like to dwell on. My delegation was glad to hear that the bilateral negotiations on the banning of radiological weapons had been successfully concluded according to the indication given earlier by the two participants. We whole-heartedly welcome the agreed joint initiative by the Soviet Union and the United States on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons placed on the negotiating table of the Committee only today.

My delegation highly appreciates this joint initiative as the first concrete manifestation of the positive impact the Vienna summit was expected to make on the effectiveness of disarmament efforts in various international forums. We are aware that radiological weapons are not in the possession of any of the States, and that relatively few States have the potential for their development. My delegation, like others in the CD, will also have to study the initiative carefully, to report it to the Hungarian Government and obtain the necessary clearance on it. However, we will spare no efforts in trying to ensure that it becomes a final disarmament treaty as soon as possible, which would be a very promising first step in prohibiting new types of weapons of mass destruction.

To this end, my delegation would propose that the Committee should do its best so that it could report to the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly not only that the joint initiative had been received but also that the Committee had accomplished a good deal of substantive work on it.

We still have enough time before the session of the General Assembly to accomplish the necessary work and to approve of the initiative in its final form.

Mr. EL-SHAFEI (Egypt): Mr. Chairman, as this is my first official statement during your chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament, I should like to associate myself with the previous speakers who have expressed their satisfaction at seeing you in the chair. The work already accomplished under your guidance during the first part of this month more than reflects your already proven abilities, and is a source of optimism for the successful culmination of our work. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate my delegation's appreciation and admiration of the manner with which your distinguished predecessor at the helm of this Committee, Ambassador Celso Antonio de Souza e Silva of Brazil, presided over our deliberations during the month of June. It is also with great personal pleasure that I welcome Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and Secretary of this Committee.

(Mr. El-Shafei, Egypt)

The item on our programme of work for today is entitled "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons". Yet I wish to seek your indulgence, Mr. Chairman, and that of the Committee, in taking advantage of rule 30 of our rules of procedure to address myself as well to the item on "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

The dangers of the nuclear arms race and efforts directed towards nuclear disarmament have been at the apex of the security preoccupations of the world community for the past 30 years. The very first resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations was devoted to the establishment of an Atomic Energy Commission with the urgent task of making specific proposals for the elimination of nuclear weapons and for nuclear disarmament. On a more specialized level, the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament devoted numerous meetings to nuclear disarmament and pursued this issue actively as early as 1962.

Sixteen years later, the General Assembly of the United Nations, in its first special session devoted to disarmament, felt compelled to reiterate that "effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament continue to elude man's grasp", and went on to emphasize that, among measures on disarmament, "effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority". The fact that the world community found it necessary to reiterate these statements more than 30 years after the adoption of its first resolution is a painful admission of the international community's inability to shoulder the responsibility it took upon itself so long ago, and clearly underlines the dire necessity for making progress on this issue, for our failure would bear heavily on the conscience of the world community.

The General Assembly, at its thirty-third session, reaffirmed in resolution 33/71 II that nuclear weapons posed the most serious threat to mankind; it also reaffirmed that all the nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility for the fulfilment of the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, and urged all nuclear-weapon States to undertake urgent negotiations on the halting of the nuclear arms race and on a progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery within a comprehensive phased programme with agreed time-frames, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination.

(Mr. El-Shafei, Egypt)

All the nuclear-weapon States have, in one context or another, declared their intention to contribute to efforts directed at nuclear disarmament. My delegation firmly believes that it is high time to complement these declared intentions with comprehensive substantive negotiations on halting the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament. It is in this light that we would like to express our appreciation to the sponsors of document CD/4. The proposals it contains are worthy of our recognition and encouragement, and we agree with its basic objective of initiating negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Additional or complementary initiatives, in the same vein, will, no doubt, enhance our work. Several clarifications were, however, sought, and some reservations were expressed, leading us to conclude that the proposal requires further discussion and elaboration, a process in which we are most interested in order to consolidate and build upon the initiative taken and with the objective of embarking upon negotiations at an early date.

We are of the strong belief that the objective of negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament should be the ultimate and complete elimination of such armaments at the earliest possible date. This can be achieved only by conducting comprehensive negotiations aimed at the cessation of the qualitative improvements and development of nuclear weapons systems, the cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and of the production of fissionable material for military purposes, as well as the progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery until they have been completely eliminated. It goes without saying that adequate and credible measures of verification, whether national or international in nature, will have to be agreed upon, and that the principle of the undiminished security of States will have to be strictly adhered to at all stages.

We greatly appreciate, and encourage, any effort, aimed at taking concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament. Our appreciation of what was achieved in the signing of the SALT II agreement is inspired by the added impetus it could and should create towards achieving general and comprehensive disarmament. The commitment by the two signatories, as expressed in their joint communiqué, "to take major steps to limit nuclear weapons with the objective of ultimately eliminating them, and to complete successfully other arms limitation and disarmament negotiations" was especially encouraging.

(Mr. El-Shafei, Egypt)

We do not, however, believe that this should be to the exclusion of or an alternative to multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Paragraph 28 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament affirms that "All peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations. Consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament. All States have the right to participate in disarmament negotiations", and it goes on to conclude that it is important to secure the active participation of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States. Given the "vital interest of all States" in nuclear disarmament, it is imperative that negotiations on this subject should be of a multilateral character, the most suitable forum being the Committee on Disarmament which has been described in the Final Document as "the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum". We envisage an active role for this Committee in the successful culmination of such negotiations. It is unacceptable to my delegation -- as I am sure it is to the majority of delegations here -- to relegate the CD to the role of an interested observer.

Negotiations in the CD on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and on nuclear disarmament should neither be a prerequisite for, nor necessarily subsequent to, other negotiations, of different scope, being undertaken in other forums. On the contrary, the various negotiations should complement and supplement each other, as a means of augmenting and accelerating efforts directed towards the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The concept of parallelism in negotiations has been supported by other delegations here. We adhere fully to this concept.

The view has been expressed that negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament cannot be undertaken in isolation of the over-all security interests of States or in the absence of concrete and directly related disarmament measures concerning other armaments. It has been repeatedly reaffirmed, whether in the Final Document or in the working papers presented to this Committee, that nuclear disarmament measures should be undertaken in full compliance with the principles of the undiminished security of States, and that necessarily will take into account conventional arsenals.

I should like at this juncture briefly to address the original item on our agenda concerning new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons.

(Mr. El-Shafei, Egypt)

The programme of action set out in the Final Document, in defining the priorities of disarmament negotiations, accorded very high priority to the prohibition and prevention of the development and production of other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons. Our position is in full consonance with and support of these priorities. Specific emphasis was given to the conclusion of a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction. A subsequent General Assembly resolution requested the Committee to undertake, at its first session and on a priority basis, negotiations on this convention, and at the same time urged the USSR and the United States to submit their joint initiative to the Committee to assist it in achieving early agreement on this subject.

We are gratified to observe that the Committee is undertaking informal consultations, under your guidance, towards an agreement on the procedural aspects of our negotiations on chemical weapons, which are scheduled to start on 16 July. We are of the view that the negotiations on chemical weapons should be undertaken in an ad hoc group created specifically for that purpose. Further elaboration of our position on the issue of chemical weapons will be forthcoming at a later stage.

Paragraph 77 of the Final Document stated that scientific and technological achievements should be used solely for peaceful purposes. It specifically called for effective measures to "avoid the danger and prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction based on new scientific principles and achievements", and urged that these efforts should be aimed at "the prohibition of such new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction" and that this question be kept under continuing review.

We fully subscribe to this paragraph and have a keen interest in actually pursuing the necessary negotiations in this regard.

Mr. DE LA GORCE (France) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, to begin with I would like to express to you the very sincere congratulations of the French delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee, as well as our warmest wishes for the complete success of the work of our Committee which will be conducted this month under your authority. We are convinced that you will give this work the impetus it needs and that, at the end of the month, we shall have reason to express our deepest gratitude to you for the valuable contribution you will have made to the progress of our discussions. I should

(Mr. de la Corce, France)

also like -- since it is, I believe, the first time I have taken the floor in plenary since Ambassador Jaipal took up his post as Secretary of the Committee -- to express our congratulations to him too, and our best wishes for the brilliant accomplishment of the delicate and important task entrusted to him by the Secretary-General. We are certain -- and his past experience is a guarantee -- that his contribution to the Committee will be of the greatest value.

My delegation is taking the floor in this debate following the statements we heard earlier from our distinguished colleagues from the Soviet Union and the United States. I listened very carefully to those statements, and I wanted to emphasize how much importance we attach to the question of radiological weapons. When our agenda and programme of work were drawn up, the French delegation stated very clearly that, in its view, the conclusions of the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States should be discussed in the Committee. Indeed, we believe that the Committee should deal with anything which has to do with multilateral disarmament. By virtue of its function and terms of reference, it should examine all aspects of disarmament and bring about appropriate negotiations.

The Committee is therefore called upon to discuss the joint initiative with which it has just been presented and to negotiate on this initiative. It must do so with all due seriousness. The text submitted to us needs careful study and our two colleagues have themselves recognized that fact in their statements. At this stage, my delegation is obviously not in a position to make any comments; I doubt that it will be able to do so in the immediate future. The proposals submitted to us must obviously be studied in each of our countries under the authority of our Governments, and this will undoubtedly require some time. We will then have to discuss them in the Committee and, in this respect, a procedural problem may arise; would it, for example, be appropriate to establish a working group? That would be the normal procedure for the consideration of a text.

In any event, I doubt whether we will be able to complete this task during the current session and, as my distinguished colleague from the United States observed, our discussions at the present time can only be of a preliminary nature. It therefore follows that, while taking note in the Committee's report of our discussions on this subject, we shall probably have to inform the General Assembly that the Committee was unable to take a decision in the matter and that it will continue its work. In any case, by taking our time, we are revealing how much importance we attach to the joint initiative of the two Powers, and how much importance that we attach to the role of our Committee as a negotiating body and to its responsibility to the international community.

The CHAIRMAN: You will recall that, at our 39th plenary meeting, it was decided to hold an informal meeting today, immediately after this meeting, to consider questions relating to item 3 of our programme of work, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". I suggest that once we complete our consideration of that item, it might be useful to hold an exchange of views on our procedural arrangements for the item which we are discussing as of today.

Before convening that informal meeting in 10 minutes' time, may I recall that documents CD/31 and CD/32, to which I referred at the beginning of this plenary meeting, have been formally introduced today by the representatives of the USSR and the United States.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 12 July 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.