

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 28 April 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Dávid Meiszter (Hungary)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 461st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

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

As announced at our plenary meeting on Tuesday, the Conference will hold today an informal meeting immediately after this plenary, in order to take up the second reading of the draft substantive paragraphs of the special report to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Pakistan, Zaire, Venezuela (who will speak as Chairman of the ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space) and Mexico (who will speak on behalf of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament). I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Ahmad.

Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan): In my statement today, I propose to address items 4, 7 and 8 of our agenda as well as the question of improved and effective functioning of the Conference.

Our negotiations on a chemical weapons ban are the most promising area of our work. This is reflected in the intensity of our discussions on this question. These negotiations have now reached an advanced stage where an end is in sight but not yet quite within our grasp. The work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons was brought forward considerably during the last session and during the inter-sessional period under the leadership of Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, ably assisted by his team of item co-ordinators. This year we are again fortunate in having as the Chairman of the Committee Ambassador Sujka of Poland who, six years ago, skilfully guided the deliberations of the Working Group on this item of our agenda.

We have been discussing the question of a chemical weapons ban for 20 years in this multilateral negotiating forum. The distance we have covered in the last 6 years is evident from the special report which was submitted to the Conference at our last meeting. For the first time, the report contains either agreed language or suggested formulations on all the articles of the draft convention. The progress made cannot, however, be measured simply by the bulk of our report. There is still a lot of hard work to be done before we reach our goal.

Several delegations have stressed the need for speeding up the pace at which our work is proceeding. We share this view. United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/37 A, adopted last year without a vote, called for the intensification of our negotiations. This call should be heeded.

(The President)

The urgency of concluding a convention to ban chemical weapons can hardly be over-emphasized at a time when reports of their use continue to multiply, when existing stocks are being built up, when these weapons are being produced by more and more nations and when scientific and technological developments threaten to trigger the development of new and more lethal types of chemical weapons. News about the renewed use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war has caused deep anguish to the Government and people of Pakistan. We reiterate our strong condemnation of all actions in violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and urge both parties to the conflict to abide by the norms of international humanitarian law, particularly the provisions relating to armed conflict.

The situation in which we find ourselves should impel us to redouble our efforts. Our negotiations are at a crucial stage. If the political will exists, a real breakthrough is possible. The convention we are negotiating would be the first multilateral disarmament agreement providing for the establishment of international machinery to supervise the implementation of its provisions and to monitor an important branch of the civil industry. It would give a significant boost to the Conference on Disarmament and reinvigorate the multilateral disarmament process. We must seize this opportunity.

As stated by Ambassador Ekéus on 8 March on behalf of the Group of 21, the non-aligned and neutral countries want the early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, comprehensive, verifiable, effective and truly global convention banning all chemical weapons. They will work resolutely towards this objective and will not agree to partial measures or limited arrangements. My delegation believes that the question of proliferation should be approached in the context of a global convention.

Differences on some of the outstanding issues were reduced during the spring part of the current session. However, a number of difficult problems still await solution, such as the order of destruction, monitoring of the civil industry, the institutional structure and challenge inspection. Evidently, a lot of arduous work lies before us in the summer and beyond. We would urge all delegations to approach these questions with a sense of urgency and in a constructive spirit.

Some further convergence has taken place on the question of the order of destruction, on which considerable common ground was identified last year. We feel that the concerns that have been voiced about security during the period of destruction could be addressed by appropriate adjustments in the order of destruction. Several useful suggestions have been made to provide for a levelling out of stocks. On the other hand, maintenance of secret stocks or continued production during the destruction period would raise more problems than it would solve.

We welcome the understanding reached by the Soviet Union and the United States, the two largest chemical-weapon States, on the definition of a chemical weapon production facility and on the principle that these facilities should be completely destroyed. This understanding should facilitate concrete work on article V in the Ad hoc Committee during the summer.

(The President)

Article VI will be one of the most important parts of the convention. Unlike the provisions concerning destruction, which will apply only to chemical-weapon States and hopefully become obsolete after a transitional period during which stocks and production facilities would be eliminated, the monitoring régime for chemical industry will be of unlimited duration and of direct interest to a considerably larger number of countries. This régime should be as non-intrusive as possible. It should also be cost-effective. At the same time, it must be effective in producing confidence in compliance with the convention.

The proposal made by the Federal Republic of Germany for ad hoc checks (CD/791) has made a useful contribution to our discussions. It has drawn attention to a real problem, that of the risk of clandestine production in facilities normally devoted to peaceful purposes but which could be converted to the production of chemicals posing a risk to the objectives of the convention. Our delegation would, however, be wary of any procedures which smack of a challenge inspection by the Technical Secretariat, as they could compromise its non-political character.

Work on article VIII of the convention has made concrete progress, and the outlines of the institutional structure are becoming more and more clear. The Executive Council has been described as the "most powerful" organ. We do not see the issues in this light. Our aim should be to establish an organization which is democratically constituted and is effective in overseeing implementation of the convention and compliance with its provisions. The General Conference, as the supreme body comprising all States parties on the basis of equality, should delegate to the Executive Council day-to-day functions of a routine character while retaining a supervisory authority over it.

The composition of the Executive Council continues to be a tricky question, and we are glad that it is now being addressed in the appropriate working group of the Committee. My delegation believes that the Executive Council should not be so large in size as to weaken its capacity to take quick decisions, nor should it be so small as to deprive it of a truly representative character. Its precise composition should be based on the principles of equitable geographical distribution and of political balance. We are not convinced that a case has been made out for any further criteria to be taken into consideration in this connection.

As several delegations have pointed out, there is an interrelationship between the composition of the Executive Council and its decision-making procedures. Equally, we feel that there is a linkage between these two questions on the one hand and the respective powers and functions of the General Conference and the Executive Council on the other.

The procedures for challenge inspection will have a crucial place in an effective verification régime - to deter violation as well as to create confidence in compliance. There is general recognition that these procedures should be mandatory, without a right of refusal. The consultations carried out by the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee for the 1987 session resulted in

(The President)

tangible progress, as reflected in appendix II of the report. A wide measure of agreement exists on the procedures for the initiation of the inspection, in particular that there should be no political "filter" before this process is set in motion.

As regards the actual conduct of the inspection, procedures still need to be evolved that will reconcile the demands of an effective inspection with the legitimate right of States to protect sensitive information not related to chemical weapons. Moreover, the whole range of issues connected with follow-up to the submission of the inspection report still need in-depth examination. These are questions on which the two political organs to be established under the convention, the Executive Council and the General Conference, would have to be involved in a meaningful way. Once doubts have been raised publicly about compliance with the convention, the matter can no longer be regarded as one of concern only to the requesting and requested States, to be resolved by them bilaterally. Every party to the convention has an interest in seeing to it that the inspection is carried out in an effective manner and that, as far as possible, a clear-cut finding is arrived at on compliance or otherwise. These are matters which could appropriately be decided upon by the Executive Council. In cases of breaches of the convention which are not immediately rectified and of violations of a serious nature the Executive Council should, in our view, refer the matter to the General Conference for further action, including possible measures to restore credibility in the convention.

We have taken a particular interest in articles X and XI of the convention, dealing respectively with assistance and economic and technological development. We fully support the proposal submitted by Argentina on article X (CD/809). Some delegations continue to approach these matters from a rather narrow angle and see them as another North-South issue. Effective provisions on these two articles need to be viewed, however, in a broader perspective as means of promoting the objective of universality of the convention and of strengthening its viability. A State which faces a chemical weapon threat has at present no choice but to acquire a deterrent capability of its own. Such a State will not, therefore, become a party to the convention, or, having become one, will withdraw from it, unless it can count on assurances of assistance from States parties in meeting this threat. These assurances should be given through provisions in the convention for mandatory assistance to the threatened State in protective measures. The existence of such provisions in the convention would by itself serve as a deterrent to anyone contemplating the use of chemical weapons.

In our view, article XI of the convention should contain undertakings for the promotion of international scientific and technological co-operation in the application of chemistry for peaceful purposes. There would be nothing novel in such a commitment, as similar clauses exist in two other multilateral disarmament agreements, namely the non-proliferation Treaty and the biological weapons convention. The case for meaningful provisions on co-operation in article XI is all the greater in view of the generally recognized interrelationship between disarmament and development and the increased confidence that compliance with the convention would generate.

(The President)

Before I turn to other items of the agenda, I would like to express my appreciation to the Soviet delegation for having arranged the visit to the Shikhany military facility last October and for the information on Soviet chemical weapon stocks. We also welcome the various proposals for a multilateral exchange of information on chemical weapon stocks and production facilities and other relevant data. This information would give us a better idea of the magnitude of the task that the inspectorate would be expected to perform, and thus facilitate our work in drafting the relevant parts of the convention.

Under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Solesby of the United Kingdom, the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons was able to complete its report to SSOD-III with great speed. The co-ordinators' records on both tracks now include possible formulations on verification and compliance and other main elements - both the question of radiological weapons in the "traditional" sense as well as the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. On neither of the two issues have differences been narrowed. However, now that we have clearly identified the problems, a realistic assessment can be made of future prospects.

Pakistan has taken a keen interest in the question of attacks on nuclear facilities. We continue to believe that this Conference is the appropriate forum to address this subject. Our position on the substantive issues has been stated in the Conference on previous occasions, and I will not repeat why we are unable to accept the mass destruction criterion favoured by some.

The Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament continued its work under the wise guidance of Ambassador García Robles on the basis of the heavily bracketed text which emerged from last year's exercise. We have noted the progress made in drafting agreed language in several paragraphs this spring. It goes without saying that the Programme has to be seen as an integral whole. Wide differences remain on a number of crucial issues - the primary importance to be attached to nuclear disarmament, to name just one. The new text on principles which was presented to the Committee at its last meeting will need careful scrutiny. On this section, as on others, our foremost consideration will be that the CPD should not detract from the priorities and principles established in the Final Document, and should take due account of developments since then.

Our discussions on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference have been timely in view of the upcoming SSOD-III, whose agenda includes a review of the United Nations role in disarmament matters. The reports of the Group of Seven which has been meeting since last year under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Fan of China have provided us with a wealth of ideas and suggestions in this regard.

My delegation believes that the present structure and procedures of the Conference are essentially sound. The lack of progress on specific items of our agenda is not due to any flaws in our methods of work but to a lack of political will. We do not believe in change for the sake of change, but would

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be prepared to support it if the need is clearly established. We do however welcome the present debate on this question as we feel that review of our working methods, like that of any other organization, should be a continual process.

Proposals for increasing the duration of the session reflect a desire to speed up the work of the CD on items on which negotiations are in progress. The existing rules of procedure which provide for special sessions and for subsidiary bodies to meet between sessions already possess the necessary flexibility. The inter-sessional meetings of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons are a case in point. The suggestion of holding 5 five-week sessions spread out over the year would have the advantage of giving us intervals for preparing positions and proposals, but would this gain not be largely neutralized by the repeated interruptions caused in our work by frequent recesses? We also have to bear in mind that our sessions have to be dovetailed with those of the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee in New York.

We support the early expansion of the CD by four members as was decided in 1983. However, nothing should be done to disturb the delicate political balance which is one of the essential prerequisites for the effective functioning of our Conference.

Proposals have been made by several delegations for a review of our agenda in the light of new developments. We welcome the suggestions for an expanded agenda, and at the appropriate time would like to place before the Conference our own ideas on the additions that could be made. The agenda has already been expanded by three items since 1979. Further insertions will no doubt be made as more items suitable for multilateral negotiation are identified. We would not, however, favour the deletion of an item simply on the ground that little or no progress has taken place on it. If this criterion were to be applied, the first item to be dropped would be the nuclear test ban - something that I believe none of us would want.

Let me conclude by saying that our present procedures have served us well. They are not in need of any radical restructuring, and they have the requisite measure of flexibility to cope with the demands of our tasks.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Zaire, Mr. Monshemvula Omvuane.

Mr. MONSHEMVULA (Zaire) (translated from French): Mr. President, since I am taking the floor for the first time at this session of the Conference, allow me on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf to extend to you my gratitude for the way in which you have guided our work with authority and skill during this month which has practically ended. Allow me also to congratulate your predecessors in the Chair for the months of February and March. Their Excellencies Ambassador Rose of the German Democratic Republic and Ambassador von Stülpnagel of the Federal Republic of Germany, who placed all their experience and ability at the service of the Conference.

(Mr. Monshemvula, Zaire)

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend the congratulations of the delegation of Zaire to his Excellency Ambassador Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to His Excellency Ambassador Berasategui, his deputy, for their very difficult and inspiring task in the Conference. It is also a pleasure for me to welcome the newly arrived Ambassadors to the Conference, particularly Ambassadors Solesby of the United Kingdom, Marchand of Canada, Azikiwe of Nigeria, Elaraby of Egypt, de Azambuja of Brazil, Sujka of Poland and Nasser of Iran.

Finally I would like to pay tribute to the memory of Ambassador Cromartie, whose death has been sorely felt by the members of the Conference, who remember him as a model diplomat who worked in the conference with skill, eloquence and devotion.

At the time when the work of the spring session of our Conference is coming to an end and on the eve of the third special session of the United Nations, the delegation of the Republic of Zaire wishes to associate itself with previous speakers in expressing its views on the various items on the agenda of the Conference and contributing to the search for solutions to the problems of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Among the tasks entrusted to the Conference, nuclear issues hold the highest priority in the view of my delegation, and indeed that of all the members of the conference. It is disappointing to see that in the 10 years since the adoption of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a document which was quite rightly called a charter for world disarmament, no ad hoc committee, that is to say no agreement has been reached under the three questions on the agenda concerning nuclear issues, whether it be the nuclear test ban, the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament or prevention of the nuclear arms race, including all related matters. My delegation considers that all the groups should reach agreement on the establishment of ad hoc committees with negotiating mandates with a view to achieving agreements accompanied by effective verification measures throughout the world. These issues, which are of vital importance and pose a real threat to the very survival of the whole of mankind, should be given priority treatment in the work of the Conference. The tendency for one group to subordinate them to the negotiations between the two major Powers only holds up our work.

Of course we welcomed with great satisfaction the progress made in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR, which some describe as "constructive parallelism", but nevertheless, in the view of most of the members of the Conference, these negotiations should be interlinked with those we are conducting in this Conference, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, as laid down in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament. Today, we are absolutely certain in view of the existence of nuclear weapons that the question of strengthening peace and security is a matter for all nations taken together; true security thus becomes universal;

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it is no longer a matter for the nuclear Powers, but a matter for all nations large and small. In this area we must learn the lessons of the Chernobyl accident. Since that accident the world has become more aware of the danger threatening it, because even if there is no nuclear war an accident can wipe out a part of mankind through human weakness.

My delegation is in favour of setting up an international seismological verification and monitoring system in connection with a complete ban on nuclear tests. The signing in Washington last December between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan of the INF Treaty, incorporating a verification régime, opens up a new era in eliminating nuclear weapons. This very historic and unprecedented event should lead the Governments of the nuclear weapon States to give specific instructions to their respective delegations participating in our work to work more positively.

In our work the Conference, which is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, should take account of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations giving the Conference certain specific tasks. It is true that the Conference works independently and takes its decisions by consensus, but the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly with an overwhelming majority in most cases reflect the major concern of the international community. We demand the cessation of nuclear tests, as in fact United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/26, adopted last year, recommends.

We also express the hope that the prospect of a treaty between the two super-Powers on reducing strategic arsenals by as much as 50 per cent will soon come about. The same is true for the continuation of negotiations on space weapons.

To build confidence, we encourage joint efforts at the regional level, such as the creation of zones of peace, denuclearized zones, the results of the Stockholm Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Vienna conference on the reduction of conventional weapons. With respect to my own continent, Africa, as long as the international community as a whole does not implement the resolutions on the denuclearization of Africa as well as the resolution concerning the nuclear capability of South Africa, this continent will remain in perpetual danger. We therefore appeal to the nuclear-weapon States which are helping South Africa to arm itself with nuclear weapons to stop doing so in order to save the continent from the possibility of a nuclear war whose disastrous consequences might reach other horizons. In other words, we are seeking the application by those States of the provisions of United Nations General Assembly resolutions 42/34 A and B.

All the nuclear Powers without exception should adopt a firm commitment not to use nuclear weapons and not to facilitate their proliferation.

On item 5 of the agenda, my delegation is of the opinion that outer space, which is the common heritage of mankind, should be reserved for exploration and exploitation for peaceful purposes alone. The legal régime at present governing space activities should be adapted, taking into account the

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astonishing progress in space technology. It would be highly desirable for the 1966 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, to be amended by an additional protocol.

In this sphere of outer space it is necessary to arrive at a ban on anti-satellite weapons, the declaration of a moratorium concerning these arms, the adoption of a code of conduct governing the placing of space objects, the strengthening of the Convention on the registration of space objects and an exchange of information on space activities.

As to the convention on chemical weapons, work on which is far advanced in the Conference, we would like the States which possess chemical weapons to show sufficient political will to settle the no less important questions still pending, for example the questions covered by article VI of the draft convention, to enable the Conference to present this draft to the United Nations General Assembly.

The violation of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925 through the increasingly intensive use of chemical weapons in the war between Iran and Iraq is a further argument in favour of concluding the convention on chemical weapons, which will complement the provisions of the Protocol, as soon as possible. Several Ministers for Foreign Affairs who have taken the floor before our Conference have expressed their concern on this subject. The Conference would be taking a great step forward in its work if it succeeded this year in submitting the draft convention on chemical weapons and the draft Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament.

For the first time in its history, the Conference has been honoured by the presence of an impressive number of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, who have come to speak about disarmament; this testifies to the importance they attach to our work and the importance of the special reports which are to be presented to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The third special session will take stock of our work on the basis of the list of 10 points to be examined by the Conference. In 10 years the Conference has not yet concluded any agreement, and has not even been able to exhaust its 10-point agenda. The third special session will have to take stock and decide on new directions through innovating measures. It will also focus its attention on strengthening the effective functioning of the work of the Conference. Among the questions not examined by the Conference which will be discussed during the third special session, my delegation would like to lay particular stress on the relationship between disarmament and development. We believe that these questions are closely linked. Thousands and thousands of scientists throughout the world are wasting their energy in the service of the arms build-up, billions of American dollars spent every year on weapons research whereas mankind needs this money for its economic, cultural, humanitarian, social and scientific advancement. Hence the disarmament/development formula should be linked with the new international economic order, the problem of third world debt, the problem of the interdependence of peoples in the age of the technological miracle.

(Mr. Monshemvula, Zaire)

The world exists in order to provide the living and future generations with happiness and well-being, and not to disappear for ever under the impact of sophisticated weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Zaire for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, Ambassador Taylhardat of Venezuela, who will introduce the report of that Committee contained in document CD/833.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to convey the satisfaction of my delegation at seeing you preside over the work of our Conference for this month and for the inter-sessional period. We wish you every success and assure you of our full co-operation.

I am taking the floor on this occasion in order to introduce to the Conference the report of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which I have the honour of chairing at this session. This report has been circulated in document CD/833 and is in the hands of delegations.

The report of the Committee, which will form part of the report that the Conference will submit to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament, covers the work of the Committee from its creation in 1985 to the present. During this time the Committee has worked actively, and at this point I must mention and pay tribute to its former chairmen for the excellent work accomplished by my predecessors as Chairman of the Committee, Ambassadors Alfarargi of Egypt, Bayart of Mongolia and Pugliese of Italy.

In the three and a half years of its existence, the Committee, in carrying out the tasks set out in its mandate, has devoted itself to consideration of the following subjects: issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space; existing agreements; and existing proposals and future initiatives.

The substantive part of the report gives an account of the consideration of these subjects and sets out the different positions of the delegations in this regard. The deliberations were lively, and ideas and proposals were put forward by various delegations which contributed thereby to thorough examination of item 5 on the agenda of the Conference. They were also useful in highlighting the difficulties posed by the problems related to prevention of an arms race in outer space.

I believe it is appropriate to point out that one of the innovations before this special Assembly will be this very report. As you will recall, the substantive work of the Conference on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space began in 1985, that is to say after the second special Assembly devoted to disarmament. For the first time, therefore, the Assembly will receive an input from the Conference on this crucial issue.

(Mr. Taylhardat, (Venezuela))

If account is taken of the relatively short time the Conference has spent on examining the subject, it must be concluded that although concrete results have not as yet been reached, the balance of the discussions and deliberations of the Conference is clearly positive.

There is no doubt that significant progress has been made in the multilateral consideration of the subject. In this connection it should be emphasized that the conclusion of the report reflects the consensus attained on important points. There is general recognition of the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space, and a desire to contribute to achieving that common objective. It is also stated that the work carried out by the Committee since its establishment has helped make progress towards the accomplishment of its task. The Committee advanced and developed further the examination and identification of the various issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The discussions contributed to better understanding of the problems and the various positions. It was recognized that the legal régime applicable to outer space does not by itself guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space. There was recognition of the significant role that the legal régime applicable to outer space plays in the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the need to consolidate and reinforce it and enhance its effectiveness, and of the importance of strict compliance with existing agreements, both bilateral and multilateral.

In the course of the deliberations, the common interest of mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes was acknowledged. In this context emphasis was placed on the importance of paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which provided that "in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies." Lastly, the report states that preliminary consideration was given to a number of proposals and initiatives aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space and ensuring that its exploration and use will be carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes in the common interest and for the benefit of all mankind.

I would not wish to conclude the presentation of the report without expressing my appreciation to all the delegations for the valuable contributions they have made and for the flexibility and spirit of co-operation they have showed and for the support they gave me in efforts to overcome differences of opinion with regard to certain points, enabling us to reach the present results, which will now be presented to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament. In particular, it is my duty to express my gratitude to the group co-ordinators for the extensive support they offered me at all times. I would also like to express my thanks to the Secretary of the Committee, Mrs. Aida Levin, as well as her colleagues and all the Conference officials who, directly or indirectly, participated in the work of the Ad hoc Committee and who contributed to its activities.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space for introducing the report of the Committee, and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Mrs González, who will introduce the report of the Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, as contained in document CD/832, on behalf of its Chairman.

Mrs. GONZALEZ (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Ambassador García Robles, who had to leave Geneva because he is the Chairman to the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies that is now meeting in New York, has asked me to make this statement, the purpose of which is to introduce to the Conference on Disarmament the special report that the Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament has prepared for transmittal to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament, in accordance with the recommendation made by the Preparatory Committee for the session.

The first three pages of the report contain a compact summary of the negotiations on this issue that have taken place since the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which, as you know, was held in 1982. Although progress has been made towards harmonizing positions, points of disagreement nevertheless remain on numerous questions, as is reflected in the draft annexed to the report.

Obviously this absence of the total agreement that was being sought cannot be attributed to a lack of hard work or ability on the part of the members of the Committee. The same may be said of the secretariat, whose members, both visible and invisible, made a valuable contribution, with Miss Aida Levin, who acted as our Secretary, playing a particularly outstanding role. Finally I wish to place on record the names of those who served as the co-ordinators of the contact groups - Mr. Fernando Moura Fagundes of Brazil, Mr. Hubert Reniéx of France, Mr. Johan Molander of Sweden, Mr. Rakesh Sood of India, Mrs. Zadalinda González of Mexico, Mr. Adorni Braccesi of Italy, Mr. Lkhagvajav of Mongolia, Miss Martine Letts of Australia, Mr. Radoslav Deyanov of Bulgaria and Mr. Sten Lundbo of Norway.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for her statement.

As agreed at our last plenary meeting, I intend to put before the Conference for adoption the report of both the ad hoc committees, as well as that of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, at our plenary meeting tomorrow, before the adoption of the special report of the Conference to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I have no other speakers on the list for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage?

Before turning to other business on our agenda, I would like to take a few moments of your time and discharge my pleasant duty to welcome in our midst Ambassador Wisber Loeis, Permanent Representative and representative to the Conference on Disarmament of Indonesia.

(The President)

I should now like to put before the Conference for decision the opening date for the second part of the 1988 session. After consultations with the co-ordinators, it is proposed that we resume work on Thursday 7 July 1988 with our regular plenary meeting, on the understanding that on Wednesday, 6 July there will be group consultations in the morning and that, in the afternoon, the incoming President will hold his first meeting with group co-ordinators and that there will be informal consultations of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. In that connection, the secretariat has circulated today a timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference during that week. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference agrees to this timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: As there is no other business for this plenary meeting, I intend to adjourn it now and to convene, in five minutes' time, an informal meeting of the Conference to proceed to the second reading of the substantive paragraphs of the draft special report to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Friday 29 April at 5 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.