

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 7 July 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Jaskaran Singh Teja (India)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 463rd plenary meeting and the second part of the 1988 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I should like to extend, on your behalf, a warm welcome to the new Ambassadors of Indonesia, Bulgaria, Kenya and Peru, Their Excellencies Wisber Loeis, Dimitar Kostov, Samuel S. Ruoro and Oswaldo de Rivero, and wish them successful work in the Conference. I would like also to assure them of the co-operation of the delegation of India.

I should especially like to welcome the presence in this Conference today of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Jan Martenson, whom I have the pleasure and privilege of knowing for many years in the past.

In addition, I would like to extend best wishes to Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of Pakistan and Ambassador Tin Tun of Burma, who are leaving for new assignments. Both Ambassador Ahmad and Ambassador Tin Tun have represented their countries, Pakistan and Burma, with dignity and efficiency and have enormously contributed to the work of the Conference. I am sure that every one of you has greatly appreciated the personal relations that both of them were able to establish with all members of the Conference.

On a personal note, since both Ambassadors happen to be from countries which are in the neighbourhood of India, I personally will be sorry to see both of them leave. With Ambassador Mansur Ahmad I have developed especially close working relations, both through membership of the Preparatory Committee for the special session on disarmament and through the fact that both of us come from the same part of the sub-continent, where we speak a language which is one of the most ancient languages of the sub-continent, so that we were able to converse with each other in complete confidence and privacy.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representative of Sweden. Before calling upon her, I should like to make a statement on my own behalf.

In assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July, I would first like to welcome you back to the Council Chamber after a gap of two months. I feel honoured to have the opportunity to preside over the work of this august body. It is only natural that in this capacity I will rely on the co-operation and assistance of every delegation in order to accomplish the task before us.

At the outset, let me express my appreciation to the distinguished representative of Hungary, Ambassador Dávid Meiszter, for the effective manner in which he has performed the duties of the presidency during the last three months. I shall try my best to build upon the achievements of Ambassador Meiszter, and also of his distinguished predecessors, Ambassador Joachim von Stülpnagel of the Federal Republic of Germany and Ambassador Harald Rose of the German Democratic Republic.

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I look forward with pleasure to working closely with Ambassador Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, his colleague Ambassador Berasategui and members of the staff.

As this is the first meeting of the month of July, I would like to take this opportunity to make a brief statement.

We are approaching the final decade of the present century - a time span that has been most dramatic in human history. The twentieth century has enriched human life with unprecedented progress in science, technology, health, education and the means of communication. It has also suffered the scourge of two world wars. But most important, it has led us into the nuclear age with all its perils for destruction as well as potential for peaceful exploitation. We came to terms long ago with the individual mortality of man; now we are faced with self-inflicted collective mortality of mankind. This dilemma can be resolved only through maturity, wisdom and a new vision of co-operative action.

Scientific and technological developments have brought out one incontrovertible fact - the interdependent nature of life on this planet. Not only has the world shrunk to a global village but the multi-dimensional nature of peace, prosperity and security has become more evident. This reality must be accepted. Only then can we develop a new thinking.

Last month the General Assembly concluded its third special session devoted to disarmament. The session was convened as a response to the growing desire that more had to be done in the sphere of multilateral disarmament since the first SSOD, especially against the background of improved East-West relations. All of us would no doubt make our own assessment of the outcome of SSOD-III. But it can be said as a reflection of a broadly-shared assessment that this special event in disarmament efforts went some way in registering the concerns of the international community on the burning issues of the day. Many of us would have liked to see more concrete results, especially when there was such a wide area of agreement on the common objectives, as reflected in the public statements in the General Assembly.

Without going into any detailed analysis, it needs to be said that the special session on disarmament was neither a failure nor a setback for multilateralism. There were no winners and losers; perhaps a temporary stand-off. And yet, despite the lack of a document, certain positive aspects of the session are noteworthy. First, the very fact that the session was held as planned shows that multilateralism is very much alive; it cannot be otherwise in an increasingly interdependent world. Second, a genuine effort was made to reach compromises; there were no confrontations. Third, the mood at the session was forward-looking but not unmindful of the enormous difficulties that still remain. Fourth, there was broad recognition that the Final Document of 1978 signified a historic consensus. Fifth, the presence of world leaders - 23 Heads of State or Government, 7 Vice-Presidents or Deputy Prime Ministers and 61 Foreign Ministers - was a testimony to the seriousness

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of purpose with which the international community approaches the problems of armament and disarmament. Finally, one should look at disarmament - nuclear, chemical, conventional and collateral measures as an integrated and continuing process in which nations attempt to tackle the most serious problems of global security and development through collective measures.

Our task as negotiators, therefore, boils down to bridging the gap in our different, if deeply-held, convictions. Admittedly, the slow but by no means insignificant progress achieved in disarmament since the founding of the United Nations is a constant reminder that our task is too important to be left to the whims and fancies of the passing moment, even when the going gets rough. I do believe that a new window of opportunity is opening before us as a result of the new developments and trends and new thinking. It is now up to us to seize this occasion by developing new ideas for tackling old problems.

Many ideas were suggested at the special session. My country submitted an Action Plan for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world. It calls upon the international community to negotiate a binding commitment to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The Plan covers not only nuclear weapons, but also other weapons of mass destruction. My country suggested steps to take the qualitative edge off the arms race, through greater openness and co-operation. With leaders of five other countries, we have projected the need for a single integrated multilateral verification system within the United Nations framework. In our Plan, we have looked at it not as a bilateral issue, restricted only to the United States of America and the USSR, or even as a regional issue. We have looked at it in global terms and tried to evolve a multilateral strategy.

Today, there is new hope for peace. The ratification of the INF Treaty between the United States and the USSR has been welcomed as the first important step in the right direction. We hope that there will soon be an agreement between these two countries to reduce their strategic nuclear arsenals by 50 per cent. These are positive developments, but their impact can be greatly multiplied when translated into the multilateral field. Bilateralism and multilateralism should be seen as mutually supportive and reinforcing.

India has been a member of this august multilateral body since 1962, when the ENDC came into being. Our commitment to disarmament arises out of our faith in "ahimsa" or non-violence, which guided our struggle for independence. As the sole international body for multilateral disarmament negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament enjoys a unique position. Successful negotiations require a spirit of mutual accommodation, and mutual accommodation, in turn, requires better understanding. We have to develop a clear perspective, for only then can we reflect our commitment to the goal of collective security in our day-to-day negotiations within this Conference.

Subsidiary bodies set up on particular items of our agenda are in the process of accomplishing their task. It is of paramount importance that the Ad hoc Committees on such items achieve progress in their substantive work. In at least two of these, viz. Chemical Weapons and the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, there has been a very clear commitment to bring the

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negotiations to an early successful conclusion. I would also like to state that I will continue to make efforts on the priority issues relating to nuclear disarmament. Consultations will also be intensified in order to find an appropriate organizational framework to deal with substantive work relating to nuclear test ban, cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war.

I feel confident that in laying the foundations for substantive and structured work during the summer session, I will be able to count on your goodwill and co-operation.

Before giving the floor to the representative of Sweden, I should like to welcome again among us Mrs. Maj Britt Theorin. You have the floor, Madam.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): May I welcome you, Ambassador Teja, to the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Aware of the difficult task lying ahead for the President this first month after the conclusion of the third special session on disarmament, we are confident that your well-known diplomatic skills and long experience will help you to give the Conference the necessary direction and momentum to do its work. I would also like to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Meiszter of Hungary, for his good work as President of the Conference during the month of April, and I would also like to direct a heartfelt welcome to Ambassador Loeis of Indonesia, Ambassador Kostov of Bulgaria, Ambassador Ruoro of Kenya and Ambassador de Rivero of Peru. As this is the last session of the Conference in which the delegation of Pakistan will be led by Ambassador Mansur Ahmad, I take this opportunity to thank him most warmly for his distinguished service in the cause of disarmament and wish him all the best for his future assignment. And as I have just now heard that Ambassador Tin Tun of Burma is leaving Geneva, my delegation thanks him for his good co-operation and wishes him all success in his future task.

Better to light one candle than curse the darkness, old wisdom says. Let us approach our task in this spirit.

As we gather here in Geneva for the 1988 summer session of the Conference on Disarmament, the outcome of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is inevitably foremost in our minds. Less than two weeks ago, the special session ended without reaching consensus on a concluding document. How are we to assess this situation?

At this historical juncture, when the super-Powers had just ratified a bilateral treaty on the elimination of all their land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles and pledged to negotiate a 50 per cent reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons, there was a unique opportunity for the world community to articulate and to endorse a multilateral programme of disarmament for the years to come.

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In my delegation's view, an agreement at the special session was within reach. It would therefore have been natural to allot enough time to try to resolve the few issues that stood in the way of consensus, which of course also presupposed a genuine political will on the part of all concerned. It was therefore disconcerting that the United States chose not to agree to a reasonable extension of the time available for seeking to resolve a few issues standing in the way of consensus. I have, however, come to the conclusion that the political will to grant the international community a decisive influence on future disarmament efforts was missing. But the international community must not allow itself to be set aside in matters of crucial importance to all peoples and all States.

I venture to say that world opinion expected, and had every reason to expect, more. More determination, more endurance. World opinion will find it difficult to comprehend, and may not quietly accept, the fact that in the end we were not granted the opportunity to do our utmost to settle the outstanding issues.

There was no final consensus at the special session. But, this is not to say that there was no progress. In the context of elaborating a consensus document, tacit consent to any draft language is always conditional: nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. With this caveat, however, we may all be entitled to make tentative interpretations on the basis of emerging consensus language.

First of all, it has to be recognized that agreement was reached on a number of significant issues. Also, agreement was under way on several of the few remaining points. In the interest of arriving at consensus, important concessions were made. Many delegations manifested determination to reach agreement - and a readiness to pay a price for it by transcending national positions.

Let me first mention one question of particular importance to my Government, namely, verification and the role of the United Nations. A consensus emerged to request the Secretary-General to undertake an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. It is to be hoped that this will serve as a basis for pursuing the matter further in the General Assembly.

Let me continue by focusing on those positive developments at the special session which are of immediate importance to the Conference on Disarmament. Thus, it was reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament remains an indispensable forum and recommendations were made that the Conference intensify its work on various substantive items on its agenda. Significantly, in the proposals for a draft text, it was stressed that nuclear disarmament remains a priority objective and represents a central task of the international community. Also, in this context the importance of a cessation of nuclear testing was reaffirmed and the Conference on Disarmament was requested to intensify its consideration of this matter. In the process of consultations a consensus was emerging to the effect that the Conference on Disarmament be invited to continue to work towards solutions to the question

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of the prohibition of radiological weapons and of the prohibition of military attacks against nuclear facilities. Further, there was a tentative consensus to encourage all efforts on the part of all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, including those efforts aimed at further strengthening the non-proliferation régime and other measures to halt and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. An agreement was under way regarding the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on urging the Conference on Disarmament to continue its efforts in this area. Furthermore, it was urged at the special session that the Conference on Disarmament as a matter of continuing urgency should pursue its efforts to conclude a comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

All this is encouraging. The work of the Conference on Disarmament received solid endorsement. However, as this judgement is entirely predicated upon the acceptance of a draft text which never materialized, I will not dwell on it further. But what conclusion do we now draw? Where do we go from here?

The answer is: On with our work. Let us waste no time on lament and apologetic oratory. It is imperative that we pursue vigorously our work in both the many areas of convergence as manifested during consultations at the special session and in the few, although in some cases difficult, other fields where such a consensus appeared to be more distant. I am reminded of a statement by Danilo Dolci, the Italian community organizer:

"There are moments when things go well and one feels encouraged. There are difficult moments and one feels overwhelmed. But it's senseless to speak of optimism or pessimism. The only important thing is to know that words don't move mountains. Work, exacting work, moves mountains."

The INF Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States, which eliminates all their land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles, is a breakthrough for nuclear disarmament. It raises great hopes and expectations. A little more than a month ago, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev exchanged the instruments of ratification of the treaty. The elimination of an entire class of nuclear weapons has started. This ultimate confirmation of the treaty signed at the Washington summit last year was the climax of the fourth summit, in Moscow, between the leaders of the two super-Powers.

The United States and the Soviet Union are continuing their negotiations on a 50 per cent reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. We know that these negotiations are technically difficult. We understand that a treaty must be carefully elaborated in order to facilitate ratification and avoid problems of implementation and compliance. Nevertheless, we urge the Soviet Union and the United States to accelerate these negotiations.

I am hopeful that these talks will result in an agreement in a relatively short period of time. Particularly encouraging in this regard I find the affirmation by Secretary of State George Shultz before the special session that this is the United States' top arms-limitation priority and his assurance

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that the two super-Powers will make their best efforts to conclude such a treaty this year. A treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of United States and Soviet strategic nuclear arms would be a highly significant disarmament measure. It would also confirm that a major political change had taken place in international relations. By concluding such a treaty, the two super-Powers would show the world that they have started to look for co-operative ways of building security rather than competing in an incessant arms race.

The Palme Commission coined the concept of common security, stating that a doctrine of common security must replace the present expedient of deterrence through armaments. International peace must rest on a commitment to common survival rather than on the threat of mutual destruction. In an era when humankind is threatened by total extinction through nuclear weapons, the idea of a war as a continuation of failed policies is no longer an option. The concept of common security provides a viable doctrine as an expression of the common dedication to survival amongst differing ideologies. The INF Treaty may be seen as a building-block towards common security. A treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic nuclear weapons would consolidate an emerging system of security through co-operation and disarmament.

While there has been reason for a certain optimism in some fields of disarmament, or at least a sense of growing expectations around ongoing or upcoming negotiations - such as START, chemical weapons and conventional disarmament in Europe - no such optimism or expectations mark the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban today. One of the most crucial tasks of disarmament has reached an impasse. And yet this is the most compelling task for the disarmament work. The need to arrive at a nuclear test ban is as urgent as ever. By the end of last year more than 1,600 nuclear test explosions had been carried out. And the testing continues. Last year all five of the nuclear-weapon States carried out such tests in spite of the long-standing opprobrium of the international community and in defiance of vigorous protests by neighbouring States. A variety of technical reasons and political excuses - reliability, safety, etc. - have been given by the nuclear-weapon States to justify the unjustifiable. But it is clear that nuclear testing is carried out for the main purpose of developing ever more efficient weapon designs. At the same time, the rest of the world - mortally threatened by these weapons - is being told that nuclear weapons are there only to deter, that they are never to be used. Still, they apparently need to be continuously refined, to be given ever more effective war-fighting capabilities. And so the qualitative arms race goes on - to no one's advantage.

It bears repeating that bilateral negotiations that only aim at regulating continued testing fail to meet the demands and expectations of virtually all States outside the nuclear club. Our demand is not that the nuclear-weapon States be able to verify each other's continued nuclear tests but that the international community be able to verify that no nuclear tests are conducted. It has been argued, by the present United States Administration, that a test ban would have to be subordinated to other, more

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urgent priorities, such as negotiating substantial reductions in nuclear weapons arsenals. Now that such substantial reductions, according to pronouncements by both sides, seem to be drawing closer, a test ban seems nevertheless to be as distant as ever.

It is imperative that multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test ban be accorded the highest priority. This is all the more necessary considering that, just as bilateral negotiations to reduce nuclear weapons certainly require time and care, a comprehensive test-ban treaty would call for extensive preparations as well.

A global network of seismic stations should be set up; it should be operationally tested and functioning, in preparation for a test-ban treaty. The Group of Scientific Experts has done valuable work in this field, but some additional work is required in order to have an international verification system operationally ready and functioning when a treaty enters into force.

It is essential to profit from collateral scientific and political breakthroughs in the area of verification. A construction exchange of views took place at the Six-Nation Initiative Conference on nuclear-test-ban monitoring in Linköping, Sweden, in May this year. At this Conference the necessity of adequate verification was stressed, and various methods, such as seismological monitoring, satellite verification and on-site inspection were discussed.

It is sad to have to conclude that the ongoing bilateral talks on nuclear testing cannot help advance the test-ban issue, except possibly by assisting the two parties in clarifying some of their verification concerns. However, the focus is apparently on verifying ongoing tests and their compliance with thresholds of limited significance to disarmament.

But it is not enough to agree on the ratification of a couple of rather meaningless threshold treaties. It is not acceptable to disregard calls for a multilateral test-ban treaty. It is dangerous to disregard the risks of a proliferation of nuclear weapons. The bilateral talks on nuclear testing must, if they are to become of real interest to the world community, aim at agreements to limit the yields and numbers of nuclear tests to a level of real military significance. And such agreements should constitute steps towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty at an early and specified date.

Let me here interject that the question of non-proliferation was focused upon last week, when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons celebrated its twentieth anniversary. In a joint statement issued on this anniversary, the Nordic Foreign Ministers called to mind the Treaty's significant contribution to international stability and security. It is a vital instrument to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and remains the most important arms-limitation agreement reached multilaterally so far.

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The work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons and on the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities should continue towards a solution of the two issues under consideration. A military attack on a nuclear facility would lead to mass destruction and remains the only way to wage radiological warfare. It should be in the interests of all States to ban such attacks. We appeal to all participating States to do their utmost to make way for such an agreement, which would be of the greatest importance for the security of all States, those with nuclear installations as well as those without.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has now been functioning since 1985. During this period the committee has regrettably reached only limited results. The discussions so far have contributed to a better understanding of a number of problems and to a clearer perception of the various positions. Firstly, it has been generally recognized that activities in the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Secondly, there has been a growing awareness of the need to consolidate and reinforce the existing legal régime for outer space. Thirdly, it has been confirmed by most delegations, including my own, that the overall objective of the work of the CD in this field should be the long-term goal of a complete prohibition of the development, testing, production and deployment of space weapons.

Pending the realization of that comprehensive objective, Sweden, as well as several other delegations, has stated that a most urgent partial measure could be a ban on anti-satellite weapons. In order to make further progress in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee there is an urgent need for some technical groundwork to be done. I want to take this opportunity to reiterate the Swedish proposal to organize within the Conference a governmental experts' meeting of limited duration to address, for example, definitions and verification techniques relevant to our common efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The Conference on Disarmament has devoted a lot of time and made considerable joint effort towards concluding a convention on chemical weapons. We have cause for grave concern. At present chemical weapons are actually being used. Only last week the Secretary-General sent another mission of three experts to investigate the most recent allegations of the use of chemical weapons, a mission including as members, Ambassador Berasategui and Spanish and Swedish experts. The conclusions of the group are not yet known, but results of earlier investigations do not leave room for optimism. Sweden condemns the repeated use of chemical weapons, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. Tragedies like the one in Halabja must never be repeated.

Furthermore, there are indications that these weapons are spreading to additional national arsenals. And, as if this were not enough, it seems that chemical-weapon technology and chemical-warfare agents are being further developed and refined. These alarming indications underscore why we should all be guided by a sense of utmost urgency in our further negotiating

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efforts. These developments also show, with ample clarity, that a convention is not only urgent but that it needs to be universal and comprehensive in character. Partial or interim measures could seriously delay or hamper the conclusion of an all-encompassing convention. There are firm commitments by both the United States and the Soviet Union, inter alia at the latest summit meeting, to a global ban on chemical weapons. However, I have to state that there is, in these pronouncements at the highest level, an unfortunate absence of any firm wording that would help to speed up these negotiations and conclude them within a specified time. Experience of various multilateral negotiations has shown that such "deadlines" can be useful. They help to avoid diverting attention to detail in a way which could become more obstructive than constructive, and they invigorate the political process necessary for effective decisions.

In this connection, I wish to recall and express agreement with what was said a month ago by the Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Genscher, who challenged the special session to bring its political weight fully to bear "so that the convention can be concluded before the end of the year". During the special session it transpired that there exists a general will to pursue negotiations on a chemical-weapons ban with urgency and determination. The Conference on Disarmament will have to continue its work in that spirit. My delegation is of course aware that a number of complicated drafting problems remain to be solved, and we have no reason whatever to belittle them. Sweden has, as you know, always paid particular attention to various aspects of verification. Having said this, I do insist that these remaining problems can be resolved if the goodwill persists.

One of these issues, that of the principles and order of destruction of chemical weapons, is unquestionably a serious one. I am, however, convinced that this issue can be solved along the lines already being elaborated in consultations with some of the delegations most directly concerned. Nor do I see any major problems which might prevent agreement on a sufficiently elaborated system to safeguard future non-production, or a mechanism for mandatory challenge inspections, or for that matter on an international organization to monitor the implementation of the convention.

Let us all combine our efforts to conclude this work as soon as possible. It would not just be an important disarmament agreement, which should improve security for all. It would also be a much-needed triumph for multilateral disarmament diplomacy, for this negotiating body and for the delegations participating here.

Time is not on our side, neither in the case of chemical weapons, nor indeed of any other issue I have dwelt upon here. The Conference on Disarmament has to push on with its work. As was remarked by Danilo Dolci: Words don't move mountains. Work, exacting work, moves mountains.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Sweden for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to the President. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for your recognition. I take the floor to voice an objection to and a rejection of the premise of the distinguished Ambassador from Sweden with her criticism of the United States, and her attacks on the United States, regarding the recently completed SSOD-III. I do not believe anyone attending the final days and hours of the session in New York can fault the United States for its dedication to trying to seek consensus on a document. As those of you who are here today and were in New York will recall, the United States had at the highest level during the final hours of the session, Ambassador Hansen from Washington, and our United Nations Ambassador, Vernon Walters, was on hand throughout the night in an effort to try to reach a consensus. And I think you will all recall that the United States agreed, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Ahmad, to stop the clock at midnight and continue an overtime session, which we participated in as intensely as possible. As you know, we worked throughout the night. The Swedish Ambassador made no mention whatsoever of the serious problems other delegations had with the final document, including wording that was objectionable to some delegations involving the naming of a certain Middle Eastern country and a South African country. She made no mention whatsoever of the problems other delegations had with the proliferation issue and the conventional arms section. She chose to single out the United States as the provocateur and the reason for all its failure. As General Walters said in the final Committee of the Whole session, there were severe obstacles involving national security and policy that could not be compromised and would not be compromised. But to accuse the United States of blame for failure of SSOD-III, with 159 nations involved with varying perspectives bearing on regional and national interests and concerns, is not only inaccurate, it is highly offensive and deeply insulting to my delegation for the effort my Government made at SSOD-III. The United States record on disarmament is very clear. We have worked very hard these past two years to conclude an INF treaty with the Soviet Union, which has been signed. We are working diligently on a START pact, and also here in Geneva on test-ban verification and chemical weapons, and we simply cannot accept the criticism by the Ambassador from Sweden of the United States record in the area of disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): I listened with great attention to the statement by the Ambassador of the United States, and my only comment on what was said by my distinguished colleague should perhaps be that the facts as presented in my statement speak for themselves. During this historic event, when it was clear that there was hard work going on in the last hours, as it usually does in international conferences - it is always in the last hours that you solve

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the problems, and I would say everyone had done their utmost up till then - it would then have been natural to allot enough time. My experience from the conference in Stockholm, where we stopped the clocks, was that we could have made it up with some more hours to help us. May I just repeat myself? It would have been natural to allot enough time to try to resolve the few issues that stood in the way of consensus, which of course, also presupposed a general political will on the part of all concerned, and the reason why I was disconcerted was, of course, that the United States chose not to agree to a reasonable extension of the time available for seeking to resolve a few issues. Another thing is how to interpret the facts, and there I can only note that there is a difference between me and Ambassador Friedersdorf. I hope, however, that we will agree on the rest of my speech, that it is now time for us to go on and all together work hard to solve the problems which this Conference has to solve.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the distinguished representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Mansur Ahmad.

Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan): Mr. President, it is a matter of particular pleasure for me to see you in the Chair. As you said, you and I come from the same region - and I might add, the best region in that part of the world - and I say so without fear of contradiction, because both your aide and mine also come from that region.

You, Mr. President, represent a country which is a great neighbour of Pakistan, and you have been a good friend and a most helpful colleague. I have no doubt that you will conduct the work of this Conference during this month with great distinction. May I also welcome our new colleagues in the Conference - I have already had the pleasure and the privilege of working closely with them, and I am sure that they will make their mark on the work in the Conference.

This is my last appearance in the Conference, and I have been very greatly touched by the very kind things that my colleagues have said here and in New York about me. I can only attribute them to their unlimited generosity and to the feelings of friendship that they have for me. As I leave Geneva, I would also like to place on record my own feelings of gratitude and great appreciation for the friendship and the help that I have received from my colleagues here, and I say this because the last few months of my association with the CD have been very intensive, and they have produced the kind of co-operation that perhaps in other multilateral forums has probably not been seen. May I also place on record my debt of gratitude to Mr. Komatina, our Secretary-General, who has been a guide and a friend, and I have always benefited from my conversations with him, and his advice on important issues has always been timely and constructive, and I extend to him my very grateful thanks, and also to his very able team.

I leave Geneva after a stay of seven and a half years. In addition to my other responsibilities here, this is also the period during which I was associated with the Conference on Disarmament, and for me this period has been one of learning, of developing greater understanding of disarmament issues,

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which, we all know, are highly complex. It has also been a period during which I have made many many friends, and I have no doubt that these friendships, which made work in the CD so very pleasant, will endure. I also have no doubt that given the nature of our careers, our paths will cross again, to which I certainly will look forward with much pleasure.

Not many who have worked in the CD have had the honour of rotating around this rectangular table fully. In fact, when I started in January 1981 I was four seats there to my left. But this has enabled me to admire this Chamber from all aspects, and I have looked at and pondered over José Maria Sert's depiction of the invention of the first machine, the evolution of slavery, scientific progress, and the result of war - death and destruction for both the victors and the vanquished - and finally, his hope for a world without war. I have reason to believe that these thoughts will continue to inspire this Conference.

Reference has been made to SSOD-III. I cannot hide my feelings of disappointment at our inability to produce a concluding document for the session, but I am quite certain that the very sincere and very determined efforts that were made by all delegations will not have been in vain. As Ambassador Theorin pointed out in her speech, SSOD-III produced a greater degree of convergence on a wide variety of important issues than one could have anticipated. And I am convinced that these convergences, which are both of conception and of approach, will have a salutary influence on the disarmament process. And may I take this opportunity to place on record once again my gratitude and appreciation for the ungrudging co-operation and unfailing courtesy which was extended to me by everyone during SSOD-III. I thank you, Mr. President, and all my colleagues once again for your friendship, which I will always treasure.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Mansur Ahmad for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. If there are no other speakers, I would like to make a brief statement.

I would like to inform you that I have requested the Secretariat to circulate today working paper CD/WP.343 containing the draft programme of work, which we might be able to discuss again on Thursday, 14 July, at an informal meeting, in accordance with rule 28 of the rules of procedure, and hope to adopt at a resumed plenary the same day.

As you will see, the text does not need any detailed explanation. The allocation of time for items on the agenda follows closely those agreed upon at previous sessions and the order for the consideration of items is the same as for the first part of the annual session. I had, of course, to take into consideration the shorter duration of the session in establishing the necessary balance. You will note, for example, that all substantive items have one week, except for Negative security assurances and Radiological weapons, which have one week between them. This programme of work assumes that the closing date will be 15 September, with one day in reserve in case of difficulties with the report writing. The relatively short period after the

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special report to the special session will lead us, I suppose, to a shorter report for the second part of the session. In this context it might be advisable to take together the question of the precise closing date.

The target date for the conclusion of work of the ad hoc subsidiary bodies has been set for 5 September, although in some cases we can expect work to continue in the event that there are possibilities for further progress on specific issues. As the United Nations is still confronting a financial emergency, every effort should be made to conclude the work of the subsidiary bodies by the specified date.

I shall now adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 12 July.

The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose, at 11.10 a.m.