

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Tuesday, 3 April 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. J. Dhanapala (Sri Lanka)

GE.84-61467

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. M. OULD ROUIS
Mr. A. TAFFAR
Mr. A. BOUBAZINE

Argentina:

Mr. J.J. CARASALES
Mr. R. GARCÍA MORITAN
Mr. R. VILLAMBROSA

Australia:

Mr. R. BUTLER
Mr. R. ROWE
Ms. J. COURTNEY

Belgium:

Mr. M. DEPASSE
Mr. J. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA
Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. PRAMOV
Mr. N. MIHAILOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI
U PE THEIN TIN
U THAN TUN

Canada:

Mr. G.R. SKINNER
Mr. R.J. ROCHON

China:

Mr. QIAN JIADONG
Ms. WANG ZHIYUN
Mr. LIANG DEFENG
Mr. LIN CHENG
Mr. SUO KAIMING
Mr. ZHANG WEIDONG

Cuba:

Mr. A.V. GONZALES PEREZ

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. A. CIMA
Mr. J. MATOUSEK

Egypt:

Ms. W. BASSIM

Ethiopia:

Mr. F. JOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. H. RENIE
Mr. G. MONTASSIER

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. ROSE
Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. F. SAYATZ
Mr. J. DEMBSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. W-E. VON DEM HAGEN
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. GRAFFFEIL

Hungary:

Mr. F. GAJDA
Mr. H. TOTH

India:

Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. ANDRADJATI
Mr. HARYOMATARAM

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Mr. J. ZAHIRNIA

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI
Mr. M. PAVESE
Mr. L. FERRARI BRAVO
Mr. B. CABRAS

Japan:

Mr. M. IMAI
Mr. K. MAKITA
Mr. K. TANAKA
Mr. T. KAWAKITA

Kenya:Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES
Mr. F. MACEDO RIBA
Ms. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI
Mr. O. HILLALE

Netherlands:

Mr. J. RAMAKER
Mr. R.J. AKKERMAN

Nigeria:

Mr. L.O. AKINDELE

Pakistan:

Mr. K. NIAZ

Peru:

Mr. P. CANNOCK

Poland:

Mr. S. TURBANSKI
Mr. G. CZEMPINSKI
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania:

Mr. I. DATCU
Mr. T. MELESCANU
Mr. P. BALOIU
Mr. A. CRETU
Mr. A. POPESCU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. J. DHANAPALA
Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA
Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM

Sweden:

Mr. R. EKEUS
Ms. E. BONNIER
Ms. G. JONANG
Ms. A. BRAKENHIELM
Mr. J. PARWITZ

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. R.M. TIMERBAEV
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV
Mr. P.Y. SKOMOROKHIN
Mr. S.V. KOBYSH
Mr. G.V. ANTSIFEROV

United Kingdom:

Mr. L.J. MIDDLETON
Mr. D.A. SLINN

United States of America:

Mr. L.G. FIELDS
Mr. N. CLUNE
Mr. N. CARRERA
Ms. K.C. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. R. HORNE
Mr. R. NORMAN
Mr. P. CORDEN
Mr. H. CALHOUN
Mr. C. PEARCY

Venezuela:

Mr. O. GARCÍA GARCÍA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Mrs. E. ESAKI KABEYA

Under Secretary-General for
Disarmament Affairs:

Mr. J. MÅRTENSON

Secretary-General of the Conference on
Disarmament and Personal Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERRATEGUI

The PRESIDENT: The Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

The delegation of Sri Lanka, through purely fortuitous circumstance and the normal operation of the principle of rotation, finds itself in the chair of this important Conference for the month of April. We accept this responsibility towards the Conference on Disarmament and towards the international community with all humility and with the firm resolve to discharge our duties diligently and in keeping with the highest traditions of this office.

I am confident that I speak on behalf of my colleagues in expressing our deep appreciation to Ambassador Datcu of the delegation of Romania for the service he rendered this Conference as its President for the month of March. I had occasion at the plenary meeting on 29 March to express the gratitude of my delegation for his patient and skilful diplomacy laced with his effervescent good humour.

As a representative of a non-aligned country which neither is a nuclear-weapon State nor has any ambitions of becoming one I recall that it was the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that spawned the new, democratized and interrelated group of bodies charged with the subject of disarmament in international affairs. The new machinery created by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament rectified the lack of universality in the participation and decision-making in the disarmament deliberations and negotiations that had gone on prior to it. I wish to quote from the first statement made in this august body by my delegation. Speaking at the opening session of the Committee on Disarmament on 24 January 1979, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Mr. A.C. Shahul Hameed, said:

"We are aware that among the criteria adopted for membership of the Committee on Disarmament is that of being a militarily significant State — a qualification which Sri Lanka can hardly claim to satisfy. That we were included among the eight new members of the Committee is we believe a tacit acknowledgement of the contribution which the militarily less significant can make to disarmament — a contribution which in my country's case derives from the policies and positions which the Government of Sri Lanka under the leadership of my President His Excellency J.R. Jayewardene has chosen to follow.

This Committee is meeting today as a consequence of the United Nations special session on disarmament held in May and June last year. Mr. Chairman, as a fellow-member of the Non-Aligned Movement you would know that the special session was the result of the sustained efforts of the Non-Aligned Group who as far back as 1961 first called for the convening of a special session devoted to disarmament. That objective was realized in 1978 following the resolution which my country's delegation, in our capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, was privileged to propose at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly on behalf of the non-aligned community."

It is five years since that time when my delegation made its advent into this negotiating body. We did so with great expectations of it but with the modest desire of listening and learning as we made our contribution. The inevitable

(The President)

question to be asked is whether those expectations have been fulfilled. Have we obtained the form or illusion of universal participation without its substance? Are we nearer to the goal of general and complete disarmament than before?

The month of April is associated in the temperate zones of the world as the month of spring. For my country, where 80 per cent of the population are rural farmers, this month is the end of the cycle when we harvest the rice we have grown in our village paddy-fields and when we celebrate the traditional New Year. To extend the metaphor, I ask myself, where are we in the Conference placed in the cycle? Five years ago we began our efforts in this single multilateral negotiating forum in quest of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. By now we should be harvesting the results of our endeavours. Instead we have to admit that we have no agreements to our credit and that we engage perennially in an extended debate through the spring and summer parts of our sessions. In this session, having adopted our agenda two weeks after we began, we established the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons with the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden as Chairman in the third week of our session together with Ad Hoc Committees on items 6 and 8. Of these, only the Ad Hoc Committee on item 4 is a functioning one, although progress remains slow. We are at various stages in the negotiation for the establishment of Ad Hoc Committees on items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7. This, then, is the record of our achievement in the current session for eight weeks. We have to make greater progress this month so that when we reassemble for the summer part of our session we would have a clear vision of the progress we are likely to make this year. That does not leave us much time. However, as you all know the constraint hampering the work of this Conference has seldom been one of time. We have had time to deliberate when we should be negotiating. We have had time to debate when we should be drafting agreements. We have had time for polemical rhetoric when we should be engaging in the harmonization of diverse views into a constructive consensus.

It is, I fear, regarded as unfashionable and politically naive to speak today of the ethical basis of disarmament. I cannot agree with this view. It is only by a clear perception of the ethical dimension involved in disarmament — whatever systems of religious, social and cultural values we subscribe to — that we can instill a sense of urgency to our work which will produce practical results. We face a critical choice. That choice was aptly described by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his message to this session of the Conference on Disarmament. He said:

"There can be limitation and reduction of arms and with it a better prospect of peace and global development; or there can be a continuing spiral of arms expenditures and arms technology which will entail distrust, a tragic drain on resources and the ever present threat of nuclear annihilation resulting from nuclear weaponry."

I have no doubt about the choice we in the Conference will unanimously agree on. The task before us is to demonstrate this choice in our collective actions as well as in our individual words. I seek your co-operation, distinguished delegates, in this task which we undertake for our common security and to assure a future for mankind.

(The President)

The Conference starts today its consideration of item 7 on its agenda, entitled "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I wish to note the presence among us at this plenary meeting of the Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, Mr. Jan Martenson. I wish to welcome him again in the Conference and I hope that he will have a fruitful stay in Geneva.

I should like to inform the Conference that, in accordance with our time-table for the present week, I intend to suspend the plenary meeting once we have listened to the speakers inscribed to speak today and to convene an informal meeting to consider some pending organizational questions, including a request from a non-member to participate in plenary meetings. At the resumed plenary meeting we will take up those questions on which decisions should be taken today.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Argentina, Yugoslavia and Algeria. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Rose.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, let me first of all extend to you the congratulations of my delegation on your assumption of the presidency in the month of April. We are pleased to see you, Ambassador Dhanapala, in this office, the representative of a country which is well-respected within the non-aligned movement and plays an active role in the United Nations as well as in the Conference on Disarmament.

We are convinced that your diplomatic skill and experience will help ensure effective work at this Conference. You may count on our delegation for its full co-operation.

May I also take this opportunity to express, through you, our gratitude to your predecessor, Comrade Datcu of the Socialist Republic of Romania, for the dynamic and dedicated manner in which he discharged his duties. It is to his credit that the possible progress, particularly in organizational matters, has been achieved.

We also wish to welcome the Under Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Martenson, in our midst and to him too we pledge our full co-operation.

My delegation, in its statement of 20 March, dealt with the situation in this Conference regarding item 3 of our agenda, Prevention of nuclear war, as well as with the conclusions to be drawn for our future work.

It was our hope that some delegations blocking consensus on the establishment of an appropriate ad hoc committee would change their position. Deplorably, these

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

expectations have not yet materialized. We again urgently appeal to those delegations to show the necessary political will and flexibility to elaborate and agree upon practical measures to prevent a nuclear war.

In my intervention today, I would like to concentrate on matters of substance. Last year as well as at this session, the socialist countries submitted concrete proposals to advance our work. I would like to point to Working Papers CD/355, CD/406 and CD/444.

Today, I have the honour to introduce on behalf of a group of socialist countries document CD/484, which has already been circulated. The proposals contained in this document are based on the Prague and Moscow Declarations of January and June 1983 respectively, and are aimed at stimulating international actions against the danger of nuclear war. They should be considered as elaborating on the above-mentioned Working Papers. Naturally, relevant proposals made by other States have been taken into account.

In submitting this paper the socialist countries are aware that the overwhelming majority of States of the world regard the elimination of the threat of nuclear war as an indispensable condition not only for solving the global problems of mankind but also for preserving the existence of life on our planet. Therefore, all efforts must be concentrated on negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures to prevent a nuclear war, as demanded once again at the recent session of the United Nations General Assembly.

It stands to reason that such measures should have specific characteristics which are determined first and foremost by their urgency, by their immediate effect on the amelioration of the international situation as a whole, and by their relatively easy adoption and implementation, provided that reason and goodwill on the part of all sides prevail. Life itself dictates that we must act rapidly and not lose time in non-committal academic discussions.

Document CD/484 draws attention to the growing danger of a nuclear war in the wake of the militarist policies of the United States, the core of which is the attempt to destroy the existing military balance. In order to provide a material basis for these policies, large-scale programmes to develop strategic and other nuclear armaments have been adopted. The deployment of more and more new United States medium-range missiles in western Europe designed for a nuclear first strike is alarming. At the same time, the extension of the arms race to outer space is envisaged. The latest information from Washington shows a total disregard for the wish of peoples to avoid the dangerous militarization of outer space. In line with those strategies, the United States has broken off important negotiations or deprived them of their basis by pursuing a provocative policy of nuclear war preparations. In particular, the dispute with regard to a comprehensive test-ban treaty makes clear that one side is blocking any multilateral negotiation on reducing the danger of nuclear war and halting the nuclear-arms race. Such an attitude is incompatible with international agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

No doubt the best way to stop this dangerous course of affairs would be the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. All member countries of this Conference have subscribed to this goal in 1978 in adopting the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In one of the first working papers of the Committee on Disarmament — document CD/4 — the socialist countries submitted a proposal to achieve that goal step by step. Working Paper CD/484 points to that proposal which is still valid.

Insisting on the demand that this Conference turn, without any further delay, to negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and on nuclear disarmament, we advocate other ways and means conducive to lessening and finally eliminating the danger of nuclear war. We are convinced that the proposed steps, beyond their immediate positive effect, would decisively encourage the process of nuclear disarmament.

Document CD/484 provides for effective measures in a comprehensive manner. It draws attention to the fact that the vital interests of the whole of mankind require that relations between nuclear-weapon States should be governed by certain norms which they could agree among themselves to recognize and which should be given a mandatory nature.

Specifically, the Working Paper contains two categories of proposals. The first consists of measures favouring the creation of a moral and political atmosphere in which any attempt to unleash a nuclear war would be abortive. The following enumeration is for practical purposes, keeping in mind that all measures, by their nature, are closely connected one with another.

We propose, first, that all countries, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, should regard the prevention of nuclear war as the main objective of their policy, should prevent situations fraught with nuclear conflict and hold urgent consultations in the event that such a danger emerges in order to avert the outbreak of a nuclear conflagration.

Second, the document recommends that States include in appropriate unilateral or joint statements or declarations provisions condemning nuclear war and, at the same time, refrain from propagating nuclear war, including political and military doctrines tantamount to justifying it.

Third, the socialist countries reaffirm their proposal that all nuclear-weapon States should renounce the first use of nuclear weapons. This obligation could be undertaken in a unilateral declaration or also be embodied in a unified instrument of international law. We support the proposal to conclude a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States.

Fourth, document CD/484 advocates further measures to strengthen the principle of the non-use of force in international relations and to guarantee its application. The conclusion of a world treaty to that end as well as of a treaty on the mutual

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

renunciation of the use of military force and on the maintenance of peaceful relations between the member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO put forward by a number of socialist countries in January 1983, ought to be considered as important steps.

Fifth, all nuclear-weapon States are requested not to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances against non-nuclear countries in whose territory there are no such weapons, to respect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones already created and to encourage the creation of new such zones.

Sixth, the socialist countries are ready to consider also measures aimed at preventing an accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and the possibility of surprise attacks. It stands to reason that specific measures of a rather technical character can contribute to confidence-building only in conjunction with far-reaching political obligations.

It cannot contribute to confidence if one side attempts to restrict the deliberations on technical aspects and to divert attention from its unabated nuclear arms build-up.

Another category of proposals relates to measures of a material nature. We focused attention on the following:

First, one of the most effective and relatively easily applicable measures would be a freeze on nuclear weapons. Document CD/484 outlines all the components of such a step and the way to its implementation.

Furthermore, the socialist countries consider a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests conducive to the cessation of the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons and, until the conclusion of such a treaty, a moratorium on all nuclear explosions should be proclaimed by all nuclear-weapon States.

Third, another important obligation of nuclear-weapon States would be to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form.

Finally, the prevention of nuclear war would be greatly assisted by the prevention of an arms race in other dangerous areas, in particular in outer space. The Working Paper (CD/484) points to the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, as well as to the unilateral undertaking by the Soviet Union not to be the first to place any type of anti-satellite weapons in outer space.

The socialist countries are also prepared to consider other measures directed at the prevention of nuclear war. The time is overdue to turn to concrete deeds, namely, to constructive negotiations on the above-mentioned proposals with a view to concluding appropriate international agreements.

The socialist countries reaffirm their determination to embark upon the elaboration of urgent and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for the establishment, to this end, of an ad hoc committee. We would hope that the document presented will receive due consideration and strengthen the conviction that the conditions for an immediate start of negotiations do exist.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Poland, Ambassador Turbanski.

Mr. TURBANSKI (Poland): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to express the sincere satisfaction of my delegation and of myself in seeing you presiding over the Conference on Disarmament in the month of April. Wishing you all success in the difficult duties before you, I offer you, Mr. President, full support and co-operation on the part of my delegation in their discharge.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express once more our admiration of, and our thanks to, your predecessor Ambassador Datcu for his strenuous efforts and energy, during his Presidency in the month of March, in his countless efforts to solve various organizational matters of this Conference: matters, to be frank, which are called "organizational" but have high political importance. May I also express our pleasure at seeing the Under Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Martenson, again with us.

Following a number of speakers in the previous plenary meetings, I propose to discuss once more the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a question of extreme importance for all of us living on the good old planet Earth.

The militarization of outer space, or the danger of deployment of weapons of mass destruction there, became at the beginning of the present decade more than an ominous reality. Outer space is being transformed into the arena of a large-scale arms race. Like many delegations which have spoken here on this subject, we are also of the view that the militarization of outer space is, unfortunately, only a part of a larger process which started earlier. The doctrine of military superiority in outer space gained popularity in the United States in the late 1950s. What was most important was not the exploration of outer space, but the fact that it was, indeed, the space where strategic warfare could be conducted more effectively. According to United States politicians of the late 1950s, the nation that first gained access to this new theatre of operations would inevitably become a leading Power in the world. The United States Administration's efforts in this direction had, and continue to have, an extremely negative effect on the international situation as a whole, contributing to a heightened threat of war. According to current plans and declarations of the present Administration in the United States, outer space is to be a show-place for more and more sophisticated weapons.

Directive No. 119 of 6 January 1984, which has frequently been mentioned during our debates this year, on the start of the implementation of a large-scale research programme on new systems of weapons to be deployed in outer space, capable of a retaliatory nuclear strike, is only one of the recent proofs of these plans. The "Shuttle" and "Challenger" programmes conducted by the United States space agency NASA include, among other tasks, the testing of military and intelligence systems, and the "inspection", if one may say so, of orbiting satellites or their capture. The United States mass media make no secret that the Pentagon is the main beneficiary of these programmes.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

When more than a quarter of a century ago, thanks to human genius and imagination, the first man, Yuri Gagarin, entered outer space, the world community certainly did not expect such ominous developments. This disarmament forum has therefore to do everything possible to ensure that the further exploration and use of outer space is carried out in the interest of all countries and all nations, for their benefit and not for their destruction.

The experience gained so far in disarmament negotiations shows that it is easier to stop an arms race before, rather than after, the deployment of new weapons systems. Accordingly, a serious attempt to reverse the present trends still has a reasonable chance of being successful. It is evident that military developments in outer space have a global impact on international security by the very nature of the circumplanetary coverage of satellites. The outer-space arms race is thus a direct prolongation of the traditional one on Earth and, as such, offers extremely disquieting threats of nuclear confrontation.

While discussing military activities in outer space, one must realize that they cannot be separated from the issue of peaceful uses of outer space. We do admit that many of the peaceful applications of outer space in fields such as telecommunications, navigation, photographic reconnaissance, have also, sometimes with only minor modifications, important military uses. Meteorological, navigations, communications and other types of satellites can be used to perform command and control functions, to conduct ground surveillance, to collect intelligence or to target intercontinental ballistic missiles, etc. The possible overlap with civilian applications — as can be seen — is quite large. But many activities are of almost exclusively military interest. It is disquieting that these are receiving more and more emphasis. On the other hand, it has often been remarked, also in this chamber, that satellites have an important verification function and, if further emphasized and accepted by all interested parties, could become effective instruments in this respect. The trend in these developments, according to specialists, is towards a higher degree of perfection in sensor technology, photographic reconnaissance, nuclear-explosion detection, etc.

The possible military use of outer space against an adversary on the Earth also signifies the development and deployment in that environment of efficient and specific direct weapons. After the so-called "Star Wars" speech by President Reagan in March 1983, a possible exploitation of outer space for specific military purposes appears to focus attention on a domain of new technology and weapon development which may have profound implications for international security. If one adds the so-called laser and directed-energy weapons, the essential components of which already exist and which offer the possibility of an almost instantaneous "kill" mechanism, the militarization of outer space and its exploitation for military purposes appear as a complex issue which is, therefore, ripe for concrete negotiations. Otherwise the 1980s may become a decade of advances in military technology for deployment in that environment. Current and future developments in this regard may bring profound changes in strategic thinking and international security issues.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

Quite a number of treaties concerning outer space activities already exist. They have been listed and discussed in this chamber by many speakers during this current session and in recent sessions, from the time when the problem of the arms race in the outer space was put on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament. They were also discussed, permit me to recall, Mr. President, in my statement here on 18 August 1983. I think we all agree that if the spirit of the existing treaties and their underlying principle of making outer space a peaceful environment were followed in practice, the situation in that environment, and in different fora debating on its future, would be far better. Unfortunately, this is not so. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/70, very rightly recalls past international treaties, the Final Document of its tenth special session and its past resolutions on outer space, and notes with concern that despite the existing instruments, the extension of an arms race into outer space is taking place. Indeed, the spirit of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, whereby outer space was to be a domain of peaceful exploitation, is not respected. The effectiveness of a more specific treaty, such as the 1972 ABM Treaty, is now threatened because of new developments in direct weapons based on laser and particle beams. These two instruments are mentioned only as a minimum illustration. The only specific negotiations so far aiming to control the militarization of outer space, the bilateral talks of the late 1970s between the USSR and United States on ASAT weapons, have been broken off by the United States.

Thus, the analyses, the statements of politicians and also our statements on the subject reveal a gloomy picture of this complex problem. The only solution is to start acting now. I share the view expressed here by the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda, in his statement of 27 March, that the time has come to bring to a close — as he put it — "general" and "exploratory" discussions regarding the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are convinced that the time has come to start elaborating relevant practical and effective measures which by mutual agreement could prohibit deployment of any weapons in outer space. In this connection it should be recalled that in August 1981 the Soviet Union submitted to the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, showing thus its readiness to take partial steps, but excluding any upsetting of the approximate parity of forces between the main politico-military blocs. The United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted, as we remember, a resolution in which it recognized the need to take action to prevent the spreading of the arms race to outer space and requested the then Committee on Disarmament to start negotiations with a view to producing and agreeing on the text of a corresponding international treaty. That initiative, however, was opposed by the United States which tried to reduce the essence of the problem to the banning of anti-satellite systems, leaving open the question of the stationing of other types of military installations in outer space. Last year, during the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Soviet Union proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, which was circulated as a document of this Conference (CD/476) and introduced by the distinguished representative of the USSR, Ambassador Issraelyan, on 22 March 1984.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

We would like to emphasize the great political importance of both these proposals. Their main political objective is to prevent an arms race in outer space, and this is their most important, human feature. In addition, with regard to the draft treaty prohibiting the use of force in outer space, due attention should be paid to the fact that it combines political and legal obligations of States not to use force against each other in or from outer space with the implementation of far-reaching substantive measures intended to prevent the militarization of outer space. We hope that this new Soviet initiative will be favourably received by this Conference and will make a major contribution to full-scale, concrete, multilateral negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The gravity of the problem is evident and great. It is even greater today than it was a few days ago. According to informed sources in the United States Administration, as yesterday's International Herald Tribune puts it, President Reagan signed last Saturday, 31 March, before submission to the Congress, a report according to which, "... the Reagan Administration plans to develop and test an anti-satellite weapon and does not plan to seek a comprehensive ban on such weapons with the Soviet Union...". Thus, the gravity of the problem cannot be underestimated. I therefore join all those who spoke here in favour of the early establishment of an ad hoc committee in the framework of this Conference to initiate such negotiations as soon as possible. Various proposals concerning its mandate have already been considered extensively last year and during the current session. My delegation fully shares the analyses and conclusions expressed in this respect by you, Mr. President, on 29 March last. Indeed, the problem should be approached in a comprehensive way within the framework of a future ad hoc committee. While recognizing that identification of different aspects and of multiple questions of this complex problem should be undertaken in the first instance this cannot be conducted for the sake of such identification itself and without the basic link which leads to negotiations. In other words, the future mandate of the said body cannot be limited only to the identification of issues. In the light of the latest news on the subject, what is urgently needed is concrete negotiations. There is no lack of examples from the recent past or from parallel exercises, and we are therefore in fact suspicious that the insistence by some Western delegations on the identification of issues is aimed rather to block than to advance substantive work, i.e., the undertaking of negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, as proposed in the course of the recent informal consultations.

We are entering the third month of this session without even having solved its basic organizational problems. Outer space free of arms and of the arms race is no longer a problem for petty tactical games. This is the problem of huge political dimensions, deserving the most serious attention on our part.

Mr. President, there is still time to prevent an arms race in outer space, but we have to act now. I hope that under your leadership this Conference will embark on successful negotiations in this direction.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Poland for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Carasales.

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. It is gratifying for me to take the floor at today's meeting because it enables me to be among the first to extend to you my very sincere congratulations on your assuming the Presidency of our Conference. We wish you every success in the discharge of your functions, success on which we may rely after witnessing your brilliant record as co-ordinator of the Group of 21 in the month of May 1983. You may always rely on the fullest co-operation of the Argentine delegation. Following his intense and tireless work as President of the Conference during last month, it gives me great pleasure to see Ambassador Datcu on your right. He had every right to go to rest for a while at Berne. He has not done so, and this shows once again the personal commitment of Ambassador Datcu to the work of this Conference and the items under discussion at it. I wish to express to the Ambassador of Romania my delegation's appreciation and gratitude for the highly efficient and vigorous work he performed.

It also gives me pleasure to see among us the Under Secretary-General of the United Nations for Disarmament, Mr. Jan Mårtenson, whose continuing interest in the items covered by our discussions is well known, and I welcome him most cordially among us.

According to the programme of work for the first part of the 1984 session of the Conference on Disarmament, this negotiating body was to have considered last week agenda item 6, entitled "Effective international arrangements to ensure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". I say "was to have considered" because, with the exception of the delegation of a non-member State and general references in speeches focusing on other issues, this item was not the subject of any specific statement by member delegations at the Conference.

I must confess that this refusal to deal with this issue does not surprise us, and is the clearest sign of the present state of affairs regarding an issue which the Final Document considered important, inasmuch as in paragraph 59 it urged the nuclear-weapon States to "pursue efforts to conclude" the effective arrangements referred to in the title of agenda item 6.

This item has indeed been included in our agenda, and at the beginning of our session the corresponding Ad Hoc Committee was set up, but this was virtually a mechanical act: no meetings of the subsidiary body have been planned for the present part of the session, and there is good reason to doubt that there will be any in the second part of the session.

This organizational situation indicates something of which we are all aware. The non-nuclear-weapon States, or the vast majority of the international community, the countries which have the right to receive clear and effective guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them, have before them, supposedly as a source of such assurance, five unilateral declarations made by the nuclear-weapon Powers. These declarations are dissimilar, subject to different interpretations,

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

almost all of them are full of conditions and escape clauses of different kinds, and the appreciation of their implementation will be carried out exclusively by the States making them. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina said in his statement on 28 February last, some of them rather appear to be "permissible scenarios for the use or threat of use of weapons that may end the civilization as we know it".

It is therefore not surprising that these declarations have been considered absolutely inadequate by those for whom they are intended. No State can allow its security -- something to which all States are entitled -- to be founded upon the basis of declarations such as those which have been made, or at least four out of the five of them. They certainly do not deserve to be described as "assurances".

The States which should provide such guarantees are, naturally, the nuclear-weapon States, and it is up to them to take the necessary steps to clarify and strengthen their undertakings and arrive at the conclusion of the "effective international arrangements" referred to in the Final Document and the title of agenda item 6 itself.

These necessary steps have not been taken, nor does there seem to be the slightest will to do so. What is evident, as the Group of 21 pointed out in its statement of 9 August 1983, is "the inflexibility of the nuclear-weapon States to remove the limitations, conditions and exceptions contained in their unilateral declarations" (CD/407).

Here lies the explanation of the dead end which has been reached in the consideration of item 6. And there appears to be no sign that the situation will change or that any positive developments will occur in the near future.

No State, or virtually no State, wishes to renounce the possibility of using nuclear weapons, even in this limited context. The architects of deterrence and their allies obviously wish, in the last resort, to preserve their freedom of action and it seems that all efforts made in this sphere basically hinge on this fact. It is therefore not surprising that those efforts are fruitless.

Hence the particular importance of the opinion expressed in the statement of the Group of 21 (CD/407) from which I quoted a moment ago: "The Group of 21 reiterates its belief that the most effective assurance of security against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament and prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons".

However much we consider this state of affairs from different angles, we always arrive at the same conclusion: so long as nuclear weapons exist and can be used, there will be no security for anyone.

The developments which have taken place in recent years in this field could not be more alarming. A new stage has begun in the nuclear-arms race. More sophisticated nuclear weapons are being installed on both sides, and the nuclear danger is visible in all seas and in all latitudes, in a kind of horizontal proliferation which is increasingly alarming. It may be asked, what decision-making process will govern the use of such weapons? Will the countries on whose territory such arms are stationed have any say in the matter? Will there be any increase in the number of countries with power of decision in this field, even though the number of States possessing nuclear weapons remains the same?

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

Do we not have to co-exist with tens of thousands of nuclear weapons deployed throughout the world? The exact figures may vary according to the sources, but have we not reached the point that to give or take a thousand nuclear warheads is no longer of any importance? Are we not faced with increasingly ominous prospects of the extension of the nuclear-arms race in outer space?

In the face of this state of affairs, which is no less alarming for being often pointed out, we heard a few days ago, to be precise on 29 March, a curious attempt to associate the prevention of nuclear war with the ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and at the same time, to shift in a sense the responsibility for the alarming international situation on to the States which have not adhered to that international instrument.

Assertions of this kind call for comment by my delegation.

In the first place, the Non-Proliferation Treaty is a very unsatisfactory treaty, because it is discriminatory, because it imposes obligations which are absolutely unequal and in some cases are not even obligations, because it arbitrarily restricts the possibilities of the peaceful use of atomic energy, because it seeks to preserve without competition advanced technology in the hands of an exclusive circle of countries, and because basically it legitimates the possession of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, besides the defects and shortcomings of the Treaty, the elements among its provisions which its authors considered to be positive have not been fulfilled. Broad international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy has not taken place, and there has been no determined attempt to carry out the negotiations for the cessation at an early date of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, scientific and technological exchanges have been hindered and restricted to an increasing extent, and the prospects of major progress in nuclear disarmament and for halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race appear increasingly remote. Item 2 of our agenda, which deals with this issue, is still awaiting, not the beginning of negotiations, but even the beginning of any serious and meaningful consideration due to the opposition of some countries which are among the most fervent advocates of the NPT. This is not the occasion, nor is it my intention, to carry out a detailed analysis of the NPT and its implications. The Foreign Minister of my country, Mr. Dante Caputo, had the opportunity of explaining our views of this matter on 28 February last. In any event, there is no denying that it has essential aspects which may be the subject of justified criticism, nor the right of every sovereign State to assess those aspects and their consequences and accordingly establish its position in that connection.

Some States may have decided to overlook those shortcomings and sign and ratify the NPT. That is their right and we respect it. Perhaps when they did so those shortcomings had not yet been made clear, and who knows if today they would adopt the same attitude. Other States, on the contrary, also undeniably have the right, if the outcome of their assessment of the provisions and functioning of the Treaty is negative, to refrain from becoming parties to a regime which, from their viewpoint, is unjustly prejudicial to their interests and their development without providing any counterpart to justify the sacrifices it imposes, and without the risks of nuclear war being reduced.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

On the other hand, what must be rejected is the right -- which certainly is no right -- to insinuate, even implicitly, that if a country decides not to become a party to the NPT it is because it intends, now or later, to produce or possess nuclear weapons and, at the same time, that such a country is therefore hindering the prevention of nuclear war.

This is quite gratuitously to attribute blameworthy intentions to States which do not take the same view of the worth and effectiveness of an international legal agreement to which, at least so far, it has never been considered obligatory to accede.

What matters are the facts, realities, not baseless speculation. States which are not parties to the NPT have categorically repeated ad infinitum, perhaps ad nauseam, their total and utter rejection of nuclear weapons and their intention to use the infinite possibilities offered by nuclear energy for the benefit and progress of their peoples in an exclusively peaceful manner. They intend to do so in all freedom, without mentors or guides, without having to ask permission and without being subject to the arbitrary decisions or political vicissitudes of the club of the all-powerful States.

So far not the slightest evidence, not the least objective element, has been brought forward to prove that such States are not telling the truth. Nevertheless, they are not believed, any technological advance is received with utmost distrust, and each and every one of their acts is minutely examined for hidden intentions and must be susceptible to most severe, permanent and wide-ranging control.

The champions of this distrust, the advocates of the strictest control, are precisely those who arrogate themselves every right and seek to remain outside all control, as in the NPT; those who do not accept the slightest restriction which might infringe upon their complete freedom of action to develop increasingly more sophisticated weapons of mass destruction or to receive them on their territory; those who at the same time demand that their declarations should be taken as "gospel truth" without being subject to the slightest verification, as in the case of the Tlatelolco Protocols.

These champions of paradox usually include, in their condemnation of so-called horizontal proliferation, pious statements concerning the need to curb vertical proliferation too. However, all the effort and concern they deploy concerning the former (horizontal proliferation) seem to vanish in the case of the latter (vertical proliferation), when the security perceptions of their military alliances and their underlying doctrines might be jeopardized. They do not even seem to extend to the kind of geographical proliferation which is increasing every day.

The quickest and best means of avoiding the proliferation of nuclear weapons is the rapid conclusion of a treaty for the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, but the fact is that it is not even possible to begin negotiating such a treaty. It no longer has priority; on the other hand, the NPT does.

We are all in favour of non-proliferation, in one sense or another. Many of us are against the devices themselves which must not proliferate, nuclear weapons. If nuclear weapons did not exist, there would not be the slightest risk of proliferation. But even with the more limited objective of non-proliferation, is it right to argue as if it were a self-evident truth that the NPT is the only suitable means?

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

Various States do not share this opinion. To ascribe irresponsible implications and alarming consequences to the exercise of this undeniable right is to believe in the naïveté or gullibility of the people. Can anyone even imagine that the risks of a nuclear conflict would disappear, or even diminish, if the NPT were ratified in its present form by all States without exception, while the thousands of nuclear warheads with which the world is crammed, and the delivery vehicles designed to transport them to their objectives, remain intact? Where does the risk of a nuclear war lie? In the States which are not parties to the NPT? It would be advisable to keep some sense of proportion.

On 29 March it was also asserted that the NPT was "the only existing international document under which the major nuclear-weapon Powers are legally committed to nuclear disarmament, in the sense that they have undertaken to pursue negotiations to that end in good faith". This last piece of information was opportune, because in fact the sole undertaking made under the NPT by the nuclear-weapon Powers was to negotiate, not to disarm, not even to halt the nuclear-arms race. This simple undertaking, furthermore, is not subject to any control regarding the degree to which it is fulfilled, nor of course any sanction in case of violation. However, we all know how article VI of the NPT has been respected.

It is now argued that the question of the failure to fulfil the obligation, if charitably one can speak of an obligation, contained in article VI cannot be brought up by countries which are not parties to the NPT. It is denied that they have any right to do so. This is surprising, to say the least. It is thus argued, in favour of the acceptance of the NPT, that there are obligations both for the non-nuclear-weapon countries and for the nuclear-weapon States, and article VI is given as an example of the latter. But when a country which must take a sovereign decision in this sphere makes its analysis of the Treaty and reaches the conclusion that the obligations are not equal and that in any case some are fulfilled and others are not, it seems, according to the viewpoint to which I am referring, that this cannot be invoked as a reason for rejecting the Treaty. The country should in any event accede to the NPT, whatever its opinion of the Treaty, in order then to be able to bring to bear the criticism and the shortcomings which are precisely its reason for not wishing to accede to it.

I do not wish to dwell on this matter any longer, but some considerations could not be left aside. All positions deserve respect, and no international instrument is above judgement and evaluation. The intentions on which it is based, however praiseworthy they may be, are not enough. The manner in which those intentions are carried into practice is what matters.

Few documents are capable of giving rise to a kind of manicheism concerning them. In any event, the NPT is not such a document. It is simply a means, but not the only means, to an end.

Furthermore, the present and future of mankind are not bound to the future of an instrument which is increasingly called into question. The danger of the extinction of mankind today lies elsewhere, in areas which it is not worth mentioning once again. The efforts of major and active members of the international community should be channelled towards achieving progress in those areas, rather than to new variations on the eternal theme of "disarming the disarmed". Rather than chasing ghosts, it is necessary to face reality, and the reality in which we must live today is terrifying.

Virtually all the items on the agenda of this Conference call for vigorous, resolute and immediate action. Some, such as items 1, 2, 3 and 5, are of immediate importance and urgency. The great majority of the members of this forum are prepared to begin at once. The will of only a very few States remains lacking. Why do they not join up with the others, so that we may at last embark on the work expected of us?

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yugoslavia, Mr. Mihajlović.

Mr. MIHAJLOVIĆ (Yugoslavia): Mr. President, the Head of the Yugoslav delegation will have the opportunity at a later date to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties as President for this month. If he was here I am sure that he would have equally greeted the distinguished Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Martenson. In the meantime, allow me, Mr. President to wish you on my own behalf much success in your work.

Today I would like to introduce the Working Paper prepared by the Yugoslav delegation, document CD/482 of 26 March 1984, entitled "National verification measures", which has already been distributed to delegations. The purpose of this paper is to present some of our views which, we hope, will be useful in further negotiations on the elaboration of the Convention. They do not represent, however, the final position of the Yugoslav delegation, and can be revised in the course of negotiations.

From the outset of the consideration of banning the research, development, production and destruction of chemical weapons, it was widely acknowledged that verification should be based on a combination of appropriate national and international measures which would complement and supplement each other, thereby providing an acceptable system which would, in turn, ensure effective implementation of the prohibition.

Basically, the Working Paper proceeds from the generally accepted view that the effective implementation of the prohibition of the production, destruction or diversion of stocks and production facilities can only be assured if there is an effective system of international verification of compliance with a convention banning chemical weapons.

We consider, however, that national verification measures could also play a role in the implementation of the provisions of the convention in all its phases. It is important to emphasize, nevertheless, that from the very outset of the implementation of the convention there should be close co-operation between the international and national authorities in all activities related to the convention. It is understood of course that such mutual co-operation can only be achieved in an atmosphere of general confidence. Negotiations conducted so far have unambiguously shown that each State party is obliged to establish a national authority which should assist and support the work of the international authority in the implementation of verification measures. Also, the States parties to the convention shall be obliged to prevent, within the bounds of their administrative and legal regulations, any activity violating the convention. The existing classification of toxic chemicals into three categories: super-toxic lethal chemicals, other lethal chemicals, and other harmful chemicals, can serve as a basis for implementation of verification measures by the national authority, as well as for determining the level of verification. In this process, close co-operation with the national authority is advisable. We are of the opinion, however, that the verification of less toxic chemicals, other lethal and harmful chemicals, as well as chemical-weapon precursors can be carried out in almost all stages under control of the national authority. This form of verification of less toxic chemicals is suggested because the majority of these chemicals today

(Mr. Mihajlović, Yugoslavia)

are referred to as dual-purpose chemicals and are widely used for peaceful purposes. It goes without saying that the State party producing these chemicals must present evidence concerning the purpose of their diversion, production facilities and end-users.

However, it should be pointed out even in this case that the measures of national verification should be agreed upon in advance among all States parties, and should at all times be an unequivocal and viable basis for the maintenance of confidence among the parties. Of course, such confidence can only be achieved on the basis of the objective and reliable data furnished by every national authority through the provision of regular information to the consultative committee about the verification measures implemented.

In other words, the control of production of other lethal and harmful chemicals, dual-purpose chemicals and precursors, and their diversion for permitted purposes should be organized in such a way as to provide authentic information at all times. In order to attain an effective system of verification and to maintain confidence among the States parties, it will be necessary to agree on co-operation among future States parties already during the elaboration of the Convention, on the basis of the exchange of expert information, standardization of methods and introduction of the known and proven monitoring systems, as well as on the basis of introducing a compatible computer system.

Such co-operation will make it possible also to exercise, if necessary, control by way of the international authority. This may be the case if there is, with the passage of time, a change in the process of production of any of the dual-purpose chemicals, or if a new technological procedure is introduced, or if production capacity increases. In addition, if on the basis of information received in the form of reports which the national authority submits to the consultative committee, the conclusion is drawn that there has been a change in production, the consultative committee may suggest that the State party concerned should also organize international control for that production facility.

On the other hand, we are of the view that confidence among States parties is also achieved by the composition and structure of the national authority. Apart from being composed of representatives of different institutions of the States parties, we think that it should also, on a voluntary basis, include one representative of the State party proposed by the consultative committee in agreement with the receiving country.

The role and tasks of the national authority for verification are essentially determined by the law of that particular country. Regardless of the fact that the administrative and economic systems of many States parties to the convention are very disparate, we believe that the structure, composition and functioning of the national authority should be such as to ensure efficiency, competence, objectiveness and the necessary confidence in close co-operation with all international institutions in the implementation of the convention.

The basic ideas presented in the Yugoslav Working Paper are meant to point both to the need for and to the usefulness of, combined national and international verification for a chemical weapons ban. When there is doubt, however, that national measures are insufficient, it goes without saying that priority should be given to an agreed international verification system. We hope that this paper will contribute to the drawing up of satisfactory provisions on the verification system of a convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Yugoslavia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Ould-Rouis.

Mr. BACHIR OULD-ROUIS (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your accession to the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for April 1984 and to assure you of the Algerian delegations' full co-operation in the fulfilment of your task.

Our congratulations also go to Mr. Datcu for the manner in which he directed our work during March.

The Algerian delegation also associates itself with the words of welcome which you addressed to the Under-Secretary-General, Jan M^ortenson.

I wish today to refer briefly to a question which we consider to be of the greatest importance, and which has been given full priority in our agenda -- that of nuclear disarmament.

Because of their enormous destructive power, nuclear weapons have given rise to widespread censure, which has grown as arsenals have expanded and the nuclear danger has become increasingly threatening. What a long way people have come in their awareness of the nuclear danger, from the condemnation of nuclear weapons in a few knowledgeable circles in the immediate post-war period, to the vast protest movements we know today!

Ever since its inception, the movement of non-aligned countries has upheld the international community's demands for nuclear disarmament. Its efforts led to the convening of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which can unquestionably be considered as a high point in the common search for solutions to the problems connected with the arms race.

The desire to eliminate the nuclear threat was given expression in the adoption by consensus of a Programme of Action in which nuclear disarmament received absolute priority.

The acceleration of the arms race has focused attention on the urgent need to eliminate the risks of nuclear war, such elimination being identified as the immediate objective, and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as the final objective.

The first special session was also the occasion for formulating a coherent disarmament strategy around the core element of nuclear disarmament, whose stages were defined in paragraph 50 of the Final Document.

Together with the negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the Final Document envisages the implementation of two highly important measures: the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests, and so-called negative security guarantees. The partners to the trilateral negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests were thus invited to conclude their negotiations urgently and submit the result for full consideration by the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The nuclear-weapon Powers were further called upon to take steps to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Bachir Ould-Rouis, Algeria)

Such a reiteration of the well-known provisions of the Final Document might seem somewhat superfluous. This exercise, however, appears to us essential to any evaluation of the multilateral disarmament negotiation process. It concerns a document that was adopted by consensus and the validity of which was confirmed, also by consensus, at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Six years after the adoption of the Programme of Action, the consensus has, unfortunately, not yet been reflected in the adoption of specific measures to halt the arms race and reverse the trend.

The trilateral negotiations have been broken off. The single multilateral disarmament negotiating body is still prevented from entering into negotiations on the priority issues, namely, the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the cessation of the arms race and nuclear disarmament, and the prevention of nuclear war. The negotiations on negative security assurances are in an impasse. They constantly come up against a refusal on the part of certain nuclear-weapon Powers to give unconditional guarantees to the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Without minimizing the magnitude of the task and the complexity of nuclear issues, we must recognize that the primary reasons for this stalemate is the lack of political accommodation on the part of certain nuclear-weapon Powers.

This regrettable attitude on the part of certain Powers which have a special responsibility in the nuclear disarmament process is reflected in a desire to reverse the order of priority of items on the agenda and to transform the Conference into a debating forum with no influence on the nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Among the arguments advanced to prevent the Conference on Disarmament from entering into negotiations on nuclear disarmament, there is one that we must reject categorically: the argument that nuclear issues are the exclusive domain of the nuclear-weapon Powers.

Instead of the negotiations envisaged in the Final Document, what are being proposed to us are informal meetings which would provide non-nuclear-weapon States with an opportunity to air their anxieties.

Thus, from being full partners in the search for a common solution to a question which concerns the security of all States, the non-nuclear-weapon States are relegated to the rank of mere "petitioners", whose right to express their views on the question is deigned to be recognized.

This attitude is in direct contradiction with the provisions of the Final Document of 1978, which recognizes the right of all States to participate on an equal footing in multilateral disarmament negotiations which have a direct influence on their national security.

Can it seriously be claimed that nuclear issues have no influence on the national security of non-nuclear States? To make such a claim would be to scorn the security interests of the non-nuclear-weapon States which have chosen to remain outside the two military alliances. Is it necessary to recall that the vital security interests of all States are threatened by the very existence of nuclear weapons? Many nuclear-weapon studies confirm the common fate to which we are doomed by weapons that have the peculiarity of making no distinction between belligerents and non-belligerents in nuclear war. While the possession of nuclear weapons invests the nuclear-weapon States with special responsibility in the disarmament process, that responsibility cannot be exclusive.

(Mr. Bachir Ould-Rouis, Algeria)

To establish a link between the possession of a particular category of weapon and the right to participate in negotiations on the prohibition of that category of weapon would be tantamount to excluding the vast majority of States members from the current negotiations in the Conference. That would apply to the convention on chemical weapons and the convention on radiological weapons.

There is a further argument which we cannot accept. It is that of introducing a distinction between:

On the one hand, non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty which, as such would have the right to call the nuclear-weapon States to account,

And, on the other, non-nuclear weapon States which, for well-known reasons, have not acceded to the Treaty and would be "badly placed" to criticize the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. Such an approach spring from the desire to keep the non-nuclear-weapon States on the sidelines in the nuclear disarmament negotiations.

As for the link that it is desired to establish between non-accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the position towards the objective of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, this seems to us to be devoid of any foundation.

Such a link is based on a conception of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which we do not share, since it takes no account of one particular aspect of such proliferation, namely, horizontal proliferation. To be credible, the notion of non-proliferation should be understood globally, in its two dimensions, vertical and horizontal. To confine the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons to a hypothetical horizontal proliferation is to sidestep the real threat -- that of the existence of formidable nuclear arsenals.

This same discrimination between non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and those not party to that instrument is also found in certain unilateral declarations on so-called negative security assurances. This discrimination, which is reflected in an implicit threat of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States not covered by unilateral declarations is also entirely unacceptable.

The negative security assurances must not be subject to any exception or limitation. They must, in our opinion, be unconditional and universal.

Regardless of their position towards the NPT or any other international legal instrument, the non-nuclear-weapon States outside the military blocs unanimously condemn the very existence of nuclear weapons. They have initiated many proposals aiming towards the objective of genuine non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Suffice it to refer to documents of the movement of non-aligned countries and those of the Group of 21 in order to verify this common desire to break the vicious circle of the arms-race spiral.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I intend now to suspend the plenary meeting and convene in five minutes' time an informal meeting to consider some organizational questions. The plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 12.25 p.m. and resumed at 1.05 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

As you know, we have received a request from Switzerland to participate in the plenary meetings of the Conference. The secretariat has circulated the relevant draft decision, which is contained in Working Paper No. 125. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

You will recall that, at our last plenary meeting, the Group of 21 requested that document CD/492, submitted by that Group and entitled "Draft mandate for the ad hoc subsidiary body on a nuclear test ban", be put before the Conference for decision at this plenary meeting. Accordingly, I intend now to put that document for decision. Before doing so, however, may I ask if any member wishes to take the floor at this stage?

I give the floor to the representative of Argentina as Co-ordinator for the Group of 21.

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): At the plenary meeting on Thursday 29 March, you, Mr. President, in your capacity as co-ordinator of the Group of 21, introduced document CD/492 which contains a draft mandate for the ad hoc committee to be established on item 1 of our agenda, entitled "nuclear test ban". On that occasion, when setting forth the position of the Group of 21 and stressing the urgent need to begin negotiations on the issue, you requested that the Conference should adopt a decision on the text contained in document CD/492 at today's plenary meeting.

It is not my intention to embark on an analysis of the substantive reasons for our position. All the delegations of our Group have done so repeatedly. Furthermore, our attitude, and the limited work carried out in 1983 by the negotiating body, are reflected in the report of the Committee on Disarmament to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. But I should like to stress that, taking into account the insistence of many delegations, and primarily of the Group of 21, the President of the Conference on Disarmament began a series of informal meetings in order to reach a consensus to facilitate the beginning of effective negotiations to achieve an agreement on a complete nuclear test ban, through the setting up of the corresponding subsidiary body with an appropriate mandate.

Throughout those consultations the Group of 21, through its spokesmen, displayed a broad spirit of co-operation. It recalled the existence of a draft mandate put forward by the Group in 1981 and contained in document CD/181, which provided a suitable degree of flexibility. The draft mandate (CD/438) submitted on 24 February by a member of the Group of 21, the delegation of Mexico, was also on the negotiating table. There were also other possibilities which the Group of 21 was prepared to consider.

The long period which has transpired since the talks began on this issue, and the deadlock which this effort indicates, is precisely what brings the Group of 21 to request this forum to take a decision on this matter of high priority.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

The Conference on Disarmament is already in its third and final month of the first part of its 1984 session, and despite this it remains unable to set up an ad hoc committee on one of the fundamental agenda items. The treatment of the item by the Conference has been confined to two plenary meetings, at which we heard once again reiterations of interest and goodwill, attitudes and statements which are not always consistent with the attitudes reflected in the informal consultations.

There is an enormous gap between what the vast majority of the international community has been calling for for more than 30 years and the response which the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body has given to this fully justified concern. The United Nations General Assembly has adopted over the years more than 40 resolutions on the subject. The last, partial, agreement on the subject was concluded more than 20 years ago.

The members of the Group of 21 have always been at the forefront of international efforts in this field, and were the driving force behind the consideration of this issue by the Committee on Disarmament.

The time which has lapsed since then and the self-evident inability so far to begin substantive negotiation on item 1 of our agenda is a source of profound concern to the Group of 21. We firmly believe that the Conference neither can nor should continue postponing a decision. On the contrary, it should vigorously embark on work which has been put off too long.

For this purpose, the Group of 21 has submitted document CD/492 containing a draft mandate which, in our opinion, is suitable for the urgent and appropriate treatment the issue requires. I must repeat that this draft mandate is, with a few formal changes, the same as the draft mandate presented by the delegation of Mexico on 24 February, in other words, that it was submitted for the consideration of all delegations more than a month ago.

The Group of 21 hopes that this draft mandate, which provides the ad hoc committee on the item with the responsibility of initiating immediately the multilateral negotiation of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests, and of endeavouring to ensure that a draft of such a treaty may be transmitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, deserves the approval of this Conference, as we formally requested last week. In this manner we shall be beginning to respond to a profound concern on the part of the international community which has repeatedly been expressed and never satisfied.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina. I give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

Mr. GAJDA (Hungary): Thank you, Mr. President. The head of my delegation will soon pay his tribute to you at one of our forthcoming meetings. In the meantime permit me now to say how much the Hungarian delegation is delighted to see you preside over the Conference on Disarmament and also to assure you, already at this moment, of our full co-operation in all your efforts aimed at achieving measurable progress in our common endeavours.

(Mr. Gajda, Hungary)

The delegations of the socialist countries on whose behalf my delegation has the honour now to speak, wish to express their confidence that you, Mr. President, will do your best in order to bring about the establishment of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban, with a mandate that can facilitate real negotiations on the relevant draft treaty. I am convinced that there can hardly be a single delegation in this chamber that can have any doubts in its mind about the aims and aspirations of the socialist countries in the context we are talking about.

Our record is clear, and thoroughly known. It need not be elaborated any further at this juncture. It may suffice only to point out that the Working Paper (CD/484) tabled this morning by the distinguished ambassador of the German Democratic Republic on behalf of the socialist countries, including therefore the Hungarian People's Republic, concerning measures necessary to prevent nuclear war, contains a clear reference to the urgent need of achieving complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests as a fundamental step towards the cessation of the qualitative improvement and refinement of nuclear weapons. The Working Paper (CD/492) of the Group of 21 concerning a draft mandate for an ad hoc subsidiary body on a nuclear test ban, clearly reflects the same aspirations, the same urgent need, which makes it possible for the socialist countries to agree fully with that view and proposal. The draft mandate of the Group of 21 is, in a sense, identical with the one presented by our delegation in the middle of February in document CD/434. The socialist countries therefore welcome this new position statement by the Group of 21 and give their full support to it. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary. I give the floor to the representative of the USSR.

Mr. PROKOFIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): the Soviet Union has in the past attached, and continues to attach, paramount importance to the issue of a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

The position of the Soviet Union on a nuclear test ban has been set forth repeatedly and quite clearly at very different levels. The Conference on Disarmament has before it for consideration the Soviet draft "Basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", which, we believe, provides a practical basis for multilateral negotiations on this question, as it takes into account the comments of a wide range of States. The Soviet Union has consistently advocated the earliest conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

On the basis of this position of principle, we, together with other socialist countries, fully support the mandate for the ad hoc committee on item 1 of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament proposed by the Group of 21 and contained in document CD/492.

We consider that this mandate makes it possible for the ad hoc committee to work out a draft agreement on the issue on a mutually acceptable basis, if, needless to say, there is goodwill and interest in the conclusion of such an agreement. This mandate

(Mr. Prokofiev, USSR)

makes it possible to conduct negotiations on all the basic elements of the issue of a nuclear test ban, including the problems of control and verification of compliance with a future convention. We are resolutely in favour of making a nuclear test ban a practical reality. In order to be successful, all that is required is that the United States and its closest allies should at last heed the request of the overwhelming majority of States and show the political will and readiness for a positive solution of this major and pressing contemporary problem.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the USSR. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. MIDDLETON (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President. On behalf of my delegation, I would first join those who have welcomed you to the Presidency of the Conference for the month of April.

Mr. President, the position of my delegation with respect to the substance of the question before us was set out by Mr. Luce, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 14 February, and in view of the short time available to us I will not repeat what he then said. I would only say with respect to the draft mandate that is set before us today for decision that it is only one of a number that have been the subject of informal consultations under your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Datcu.

My delegation fully supports the proposal that these consultations should continue in order that we reach a genuine compromise proposal, a genuine consensus. Because of that we consider it premature to take a decision on one particular draft today. We are therefore unable to agree to adopt this draft decision as set before us.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom. Is there any other delegation wishing to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President. As this is the first occasion on which I, as Head of the Australian delegation, have taken the floor at a plenary meeting following your taking the Chair at our Conference, may I congratulate you on doing so. We are delighted to see a representative of Sri Lanka in the Chair, a country which is close to Australia and with which we have a long and deep association. You know well, too, Mr. Chairman, that it is a little over 17 years ago that you and I met for the first time, and to see you in this Chair gives me particular personal pleasure. We are certain that you will guide the work of this Conference with the skill, wisdom and, I think, ethical perspective that you mentioned this morning, and which is typical of Sri Lankans as I know them.

My delegation is concerned at the device that has been used here today. It is true that a draft mandate in almost identical terms to the one embodied in document CD/492 has been before the Conference for some little while. It is also true that other suggested approaches to this question have been before the Conference

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

formally and informally, for some little while. It is my delegation's clear impression that with further consultation the substantive problems that are at issue could have been and, I believe, will be solved. There are substantive problems at issue, and I would like to refer to one of them, namely, the question that normally comes under the heading "Scope". This draft mandate restricts the consideration of the ad hoc subsidiary body to nuclear-weapon tests. It is the earnest hope of my Government that the treaty that we so earnestly desire and to which we are utterly committed will be wider in scope than such a treaty, and will embrace all nuclear tests without exception.

My delegation would therefore like to see a mandate adopted which reflected that objective, an objective to which I believe most delegations that have addressed this subject in this Conference and in its predecessor Committee have repeatedly committed themselves. Yet, when that commitment is translated into a possible mandate, it is restricted in its scope. My delegation would like to see these consultations continue. As I mentioned in our informal session, there are other ideas, some of which have originated with the Australian Government.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for the kind remarks addressed to my country and to me personally.

Unless there are any other representatives who wish to take the floor, I would like to conclude our discussion on this subject.

In view of the statements just made, it is obvious that there is no consensus at present on the draft mandate contained in document CD/492.

Does any member wish to take the floor at this stage? I give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I wish to make a short statement on behalf of the Group of 21, which I hope will be the last for today. It is the following.

In the light of what has just transpired, once again the Group of 21, and indeed the Conference on Disarmament itself and the international community in general, have been frustrated or remain frustrated in their efforts to establish a suitable instrument in order to begin meaningful negotiations on a nuclear-weapon test ban treaty. Despite all the efforts and flexibility shown by the Group of 21 in order to reach agreement upon a suitable mandate for the ad hoc committee to be set up on the agenda item, the refusal or the difficulties of some delegations have demonstrated the impossibility of reaching consensus, at least for the time being, on this priority issue.

The Group of 21, nevertheless, in its constant spirit of co-operation, is prepared to consider any proposal presented by any delegation on this question, and particularly by those delegations which so far, as I stated earlier, have not made it possible for the Conference on Disarmament to begin serious negotiations on this treaty, which is the first item on our agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina. As there is no other business for today, I intend to adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 5 April at 10.30 a.m. The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.