

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING  
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 10 July 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. V.L. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. B. OULD-ROUIS  
Mr. A. TAFFAR

Argentina: Mr. J. CARASALES  
Mr. R. GARCIA MORITAN  
Mr. R. VILLAMBROSA  
Mr. R.R. HUBERT

Australia: Mr. R. ROWE  
Mrs. S. FREEMAN  
Miss J. COURTNEY

Belgium: Mr. M. DEPASSE  
Mr. J.M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil: Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA  
Mr. S. QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV  
Mr. P. POPTCHEV  
Mr. C. PRAMOV

Burma: U MAUNG MAUNG GYI  
U HLA MYINT  
U PE THEIN TIN

Canada: Mr. J.A. BEESLEY  
Mr. R.J. ROCHON  
Mr. M.C. HAMBLIN

China: Mr. QIAN JIADONG  
Ms. WANG ZHIYUN  
Mr. LIN CHENG  
Mr. ZHANG WEIDONG  
Mr. SUO KAIMING  
Mr. LU MINGJUN

Cuba: Mr. C. LECHUGA HEVIA  
Mr. E. DE LA CRUZ  
Mr. J.L. GARCIA

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. VEJVODA  
Mr. J. MATOUSEK  
Mr. A. CIMA

Egypt:

Mr. S. ALFARARGI  
Mr. I.A. HASSAN  
Mr. M. BADR  
Mr. A.M. ABBAS

Ethiopia:France:

Mr. F. de la GORCE  
Mr. G. MONTASSIER  
Mr. H. RENIE  
Mr. GESBERT

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. ROSE  
Mr. H. THIELICKE  
Mr. W. KUBICZEK  
Mr. F. SAYATZ

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. ALOIS MERTES  
Mr. H. WEGENER  
Mr. F. ELBE  
Mr. M. GERDTS  
Mr. W. Von dem HAGEN

Hungary:

Mr. D. MEISZTER  
Mr. H. TOTH

India:

Mr. M. DUBEY  
Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. S. SUTOWARDOYO  
Mr. I.M. DAMANIK  
Mrs. P. RAMADHAN  
Mr. F. QASIM  
Mr. I. WIRANATAATMADJA  
Miss M.N. DARSA

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Mr. N.K. KAMYAB  
Mr. F.S. SIRJANI

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI  
Mr. B. CABRAS  
Mr. G. ADORNI BRACCESI  
Mr. R. DI CARLO  
Mr. M. PAVESE

Japan:

Mr. M. IMAI  
Mr. M. KONISHI  
Mr. T. ISHIGURI

Kenya:Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES  
Ms. S. GONZALEZ REYNERO  
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA

Mongolia:

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

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI  
Mr. O. HILALE

Netherlands:

Mr. R.J. Van SCHAIK  
Mr. J. RAMAKER  
Mr. R. AKKERMAN

Nigeria:

Mr. J.O. OBOH  
Mr. F.O. ADESHIDA

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AHMAD  
Mr. K. NIAZ

Peru:

Mr. P. CANNOCK  
Mr. C. CASTILLO RAMIREZ  
Mr. A. THORNBERRY

Poland:

Mr. S. TURBANSKI  
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ

Romania:

Mr. I. DATCU  
Mr. T. MELESCANU  
Mr. A. POPESCU

Sri Lanka:

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

Sweden:

Mr. R. EKEUS  
Mrs. E. BONNIER  
Mr. H. BERGLUND  
Mr. J. LUNDIN  
Mrs. A.M. LAU

Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN  
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV  
Mr. P.Y. SKOMOROKHIN  
Mr. V.P. PRIAKHIN  
Mr. S.V. NAGRADOV  
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE  
Mr. L.J. MIDDLETON  
Mr. D.A. SLINN

United States of America:

Mr. N.G. CLYNE  
Mr. H.W. DAVIDSON  
Mr. R. SCOTT  
Mr. J. MISKEL  
Mr. A. HOROWITZ  
Mr. B. MORTON  
Mr. R. WATERS  
Mr. P.S. CORDEN  
Mr. A. LIEBOWITZ  
Mr. J.E. MCATEER  
Mr. J.J. TIERNEY  
Mr. C. WELLS  
Ms. M. WINSTON  
Mr. R. MIKULAK

Venezuela:

Mr. T. LABROADOR RUBIO

Mr. O. GARCIA GARCIA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. O. GNOK

Secretary-General of the United Nations: Mr. J. PEREZ DE CUELLAR

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. BERASATEGUI

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I declare open the 271st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish to extend, on behalf of all members of the Conference, a warm welcome to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, who takes a special interest in disarmament questions and has been a leading voice in promoting negotiations on disarmament. He delivered an important address to the Committee on Disarmament last year and he has again expressed interest in conveying to us his views on one of the most important questions of our time. I am sure that his presence here today will encourage us all to renew our efforts in the promotion of the objectives pursued by this multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

I would like to welcome the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Alois Mertes, who will address the Conference today. I am sure that members will be listening to his statement with particular interest.

The Conference starts today its consideration of item 4 on its agenda, entitled "Chemical weapons". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any speaker wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

In addition to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, I also have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia, Australia and Belgium.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

Mr. PEREZ DE CUELLAR (Secretary-General of the United Nations) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, distinguished representatives, I believe it is a very sound practice for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to send a message to the Disarmament Conference at the opening of its session. Last year I had the pleasure of delivering it in person, and I am now doing so again, in order to convey to you just what a high priority conventional and nuclear disarmament has for me. Allow me, therefore, to tell you of my concern and to put forward some ideas on the present state of affairs, which is the cause of such deep anxiety for all nations.

We find ourselves in a special situation which is at once a threat and a challenge. The threat arises from the extension of the arms race into the new dimension of outer space and from the emergence of new weapon systems which are difficult to verify. This trend will destabilize still further an already precarious situation, which has its origin in the atmosphere of mutual suspicion prevailing between the two leading nuclear Powers.

The challenge is to acquire the necessary capacity to dispel this mutual suspicion and to establish in its place the essential basis for mutual trust which will enable us to halt the arms race and progressively negotiate reductions in arms levels. That, of course, is easier said than done, because to promote mutual understanding between different systems is a difficult and delicate task. Nevertheless, in the present dangerous circumstances it is urgently necessary to undertake that task. I shall not fail to perform the role that falls to me in this effort.

(Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations)

The possibility that has confronted us for some time is the danger of a nuclear war and the threat of mutual extermination, and indeed of the actual extinction of mankind.

I know full well that the Conference has with admirable perseverance been considering appropriate and practical measures to avoid a nuclear war. Nuclear war is something infinitely more destructive than the conventional wars that have occurred throughout history. There is no other problem that is more immediate or that more closely affects the human race and all its values. In my report to the General Assembly last year, I stated that nuclear war would be the final negation of the work of man. Although the basic key to the avoidance of nuclear war is in the hands of the leading nuclear Powers, the others also have a duty to make a contribution, controlling situations which could reach the dangerous nuclear threshold. The survival of the human race cannot be at the mercy of negotiations between the dominant Powers!

I am also concerned, and most particularly, at the lack of progress towards a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. A few years ago the prospects seemed better, but at present there is a deadlock on the efficacy of verification techniques. This is, once again, a reflection of the absence of mutual trust. I wish to make an urgent appeal for a new spirit and a new approach to the consideration of this matter, and for the work that has been suspended to be started again with a view to arriving at acceptable solutions.

The problem of preventing the arms race in outer space has been before this Conference since 1982. With regard to the establishment of a subsidiary body to make a thorough study of the question and undertake negotiations, there are obviously serious differences of approach, which I hope can be overcome. Any effort -- bilateral or multilateral -- which might lead to the final objective of preventing an arms race in outer space must be encouraged. The General Assembly has assigned an important role to the process of multilateral negotiation in this Conference, and that role should be fulfilled.

I note with satisfaction that effective negotiations have begun regarding a convention on the prohibition of the production of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles. This has been received as evidence of a laudable political will. Without underestimating the complexity of the problems involved in this question, I would urge that all the necessary efforts should be made to negotiate realistic compromises in the interests of mankind. The time has come to conclude this convention, for which the world is waiting.

In my address to this Conference last year, I said that the progress of its work should not be subordinate to the bilateral talks between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. I regard the bilateral process aimed at achieving disarmament as complementary to the main process at the multilateral level. It is therefore important that the efforts of this Conference should be maintained and increased. In the present critical situation there is in point of fact no alternative but to intensify our efforts. The international community is anxious and watchful.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): Allow me on behalf of the members of the Conference to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his important statement.

Distinguished delegates, allow me to say a few words in my capacity as representative of the Soviet Union.

Distinguished Mr. Secretary-General, in connection with your official visit to Moscow which is to begin tomorrow I would like to emphasize that the Soviet Union has been continuously calling for a greater contribution on the part of the United Nations to the cause of arms limitation and disarmament. It consistently supports the efforts aimed at enhancing the role of this Organization in providing for international peace and security and developing peaceful co-operation among States in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The constructive nature of the Soviet position with regard to the curbing of the arms race and disarmament is evidenced by the Soviet Union's record of voting in favour of the vast majority of resolutions on those issues at the sessions of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, K.U. Chernenko, pointed out that in order to consolidate the foundations of peace, full use should be made also of the potential of "the United Nations which is indeed designed to maintain and strengthen peace". Allow me to express confidence that your forthcoming visit to my country will be a success and that it will bring another contribution to the strengthening of co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United Nations.

Distinguished delegates, I now suggest that we have a short recess during which I invite the Heads or Acting Heads of delegations to meet with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the Czech Salon. The plenary meeting will be resumed in 15 to 20 minutes time. The plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. and reconvened at 11.10 a.m.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): The 271st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

You will recall that, in accordance with the time-table for meetings to be held by the Conference during the present week, we should convene an informal meeting immediately after this plenary to consider two questions: (a) Proposals for subsidiary bodies under items on the agenda and consideration of decisions, if necessary; and (b) Invitation of the Preparatory Committee for the Third NPT Review Conference.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, His Excellency the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Alois Mertes.

Mr. MERTES (Federal Republic of Germany): I am privileged to address the Conference on Disarmament today. It is a welcome coincidence that the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presides over the proceedings while I take the floor. I would like therefore to begin with a few words in Russian.

(Mr. Mertes, Federal Republic of Germany)

[spoke in Russian]: Your Presidency gives me an opportunity to underline the interest of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany in fruitful and balanced relations between our two countries, beneficial for the Soviet and the German people, and thereby for genuine détente and lasting peace in Europe, based on the principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Final Act of Helsinki. This relationship constitutes an important element of the indispensable dialogue between East and West, a dialogue so sensitive to any disturbance or interruption. The Federal Republic of Germany is committed to such a policy of dialogue, co-operation and negotiations. We remain convinced that a dense web of relations will increasingly lead to a situation of good neighbourhood between the Federal Republic of Germany, a loyal member State of the European Community and the North Atlantic Alliance, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and all her allies on the other. Our bilateral Treaty of 1970, the central provision of which is a concretized renunciation of the threat or use of force, was concluded with that perspective.

[spoke in English]: What our first Federal Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, said in September 1955 in Moscow, when he paid the first visit to your country 10 years after the end of the Second World War, remains true:

"The longing that has grasped all mankind that war may have outlived itself by virtue of its own horrible nature, this longing is strongly and deeply alive in the hearts of Germans. We wish that our relations with the peoples of the Soviet Union be governed by peace, security, economic co-operation and the avoidance of tensions. We share the view of the Soviet leadership that the interests of peace and European security, as well as the national interests of the Soviet and German people, demand a normalization in this spirit."

It is a source of particular satisfaction to me that I speak immediately subsequent to the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, who has, from his position, paid tribute to the Conference on Disarmament as one of the most important fora of negotiations of our time. I have attentively listened to his message, while his comprehensive address to the Conference of last year still rings in the ears of the delegations here assembled. I note with gratitude that the Secretary-General has equally honoured the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Europe, the Stockholm Conference, only Friday of last week. He has thus put the weight of the community of nations behind these two negotiating Conferences, two major endeavours in the security and disarmament field that are operational at the present point.

The significance which the Secretary-General has again attributed to the Conference on Disarmament corresponds to the importance my Government assigns to it. The Conference on Disarmament is the only forum for arms control negotiations which has been established as a permanent structure. It is also the only forum in which all five nuclear-weapon States are united to deal with the issues of disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

But the most important feature of the Conference is the presence of a great number of non-aligned and neutral States from all parts of the world. The emergence of new focal points of power, crises and conflicts in the Third World, closely connected with the growth of military potentials in the countries of the Third World, make it imperative that arms control efforts are not only viewed in

(Mr. Mertes, Federal Republic of Germany)

the East-West context, but appreciated in their global dimension. My Government fully realizes that the countries of the Third World that are here assembled, find in the Conference their opportunity of participating in the overriding issues of disarmament and security which are so intrinsically linked. The interested countries of the Third World have a stake of their own in the proceedings of this Conference, but they have also managed to cushion the effects of East-West controversy, so that the Conference on Disarmament has been enabled to function — and to produce useful work — even at a time when important nuclear negotiations between the two Great Powers have been unilaterally suspended. The broadly representative nature of the Conference on Disarmament shows its potential and significance, but also indicates its particular responsibility.

We all know, nevertheless, that the work of the Conference has been beset by great difficulties and that progress has been slow. Let me assure you, nevertheless, Mr. President, that the German Bundestag and public of the Federal Republic of Germany watch the proceedings of this Conference closely. It is the wish of my Government to contribute to the proceedings to the best of its ability. Only recently the German Bundestag has forcefully supported the commitment of the Federal German Government to a world-wide verifiable interdiction of all chemical weapons. In this spirit, the German Bundestag has welcomed all recent initiatives that have been submitted to this Conference, most recently the draft convention submitted by the United States.

In the views of the legislators of the Federal Republic, this draft with its built-in flexibility provides a concrete and realistic contribution to the permanent abolition of a whole category of weapons. The German Bundestag and the Federal Government are unanimous in their position that a global interdiction of chemical weapons for all times is vastly superior to any regional solution, for example in terms of chemical-weapon-free zones. Any regional approach would divert attention from the global effort and, in all likelihood, prove ineffective, given the complexity of the verification issues. Regional negotiations on a chemical-weapons ban would also exclude Third World countries from the solution of a problem which they, too, perceive to be of global importance.

My Government has repeatedly called for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and welcomes all constructive efforts in this Conference to approach the remaining — but essential — problems of the verification of a future ban, as well as the unresolved institutional issues of a future test stop regime. In this context, efforts to limit testing options at least gradually — pending the achievement of a comprehensive ban — find the support of my Government, not least in the perspective of the forthcoming Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In the view of my Government, multilateral efforts to curb a further arms build-up in outer space are very much in the domain of this Conference. My Government has strongly welcomed the present bilateral attempts at bringing about negotiations in this field, and we hope that talks between the United States and the Soviet Union will begin in September. At the same time, multilateral action will undoubtedly continue to remain of importance. The Federal Republic of Germany is interested in finalizing as rapidly as possible a Convention on the permanent interdiction of Radiological Weapons, and

(Mr. Mertes, Federal Republic of Germany)

remains fully prepared to regulate in that context the prohibition of attacks on civilian nuclear facilities. Prevention of war, including its nuclear dimension, must be the highest priority of every member of the community of States. My delegation supports the creation of an appropriate working unit to discuss all problems conducive to heightening the probability of the prevention of war, and deems it important that a Committee of the Conference soon embarks on the appropriate groundwork for the fulfilment of this pivotal task.

Nobody should underestimate the potential of the Conference to deal with these and other matters in a constructive and forward-looking manner. Yet, what unfortunately is still missing — outside of the purview of the Conference, but of great significance for its work — are the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States in the nuclear field. As many western governments have repeatedly underscored, the United States is ready to resume the negotiations on INF and START at any time and without any preconditions. They have appealed to the Soviet Union to return to the negotiating table and it is to be hoped that there will be an early resumption of the talks.

Let me dwell on the vital and complex issue of prevention of war in analysing some aspects of security policy in general.

If one is to believe some public declarations and speculations over the last months, tensions in the world have reached a new ominous dimension. The outbreak of nuclear war is depicted as having reached a degree of risk higher than ever before. My Government does not share these exaggerated apprehensions, because we do not think that any nuclear-weapon State wants to commit suicide. They all — and this is particularly true of the United States and the Soviet Union, the two nuclear super-Powers and at the same time the two initiators of the Non-Proliferation Treaty — behave most rationally and cautiously in the face of the nuclear war risk, since it affects their own survival. Indeed, they have developed a system of co-operative arrangements shielding them and their allies from the risks inherent in modern military machinery.

There is, however, one true element in the widespread war fear: tensions are dangerous and they must not be allowed to grow uncontrolled lest they may indeed unleash a conflict. It is an obvious fact that the nuclear potential in East and West may spell apocalyptic events, once war breaks out. One cannot deny that — apart from the determinant political causes of tension and military build-up — there exists also a causal relationship between the enormous build-up of military potential in the nuclear, conventional and other military domains and the emergence of such fears. The dynamic arms build-up itself has become a source of tensions, insecurity and mutual suspicion.

In this situation it is particularly necessary to reflect upon concepts of security, to analyse the various meanings security may have, and to find out how security needs are best assessed. One essential intellectual step is to see that "security" has two complementary sides. On the one hand, there is the

(Mr. Mertes, Federal Republic of Germany)

instinctive urge of States to provide for their security and survival by creating armaments that match the perceived political and military threat emanating from others. To that extent, security is defined in terms of potentially antagonistic relationships. This is the concept of defensive security vis-à-vis a potential adversary. On the other hand, there is the need for co-operative security by which States embed themselves in a mutually supportive relationship, based on the necessity of being protected against anonymous dangers which threaten all of them, indeed all of us. Both concepts of security, defensive security against the perceived or potential adversary, and co-operative security with that potential adversary, are indispensable. And none must be neglected, although it must be our joint objective to move towards a heightening of the latter. In the meantime, it would be dangerous to confuse the two.

The central difficulty which we experience in international discussions on security and disarmament is the fact that States consider it an essential attribute of their sovereignty to define autonomously what they see as a political and military threat and what they deem necessary to stave off the threat by defensive armament efforts of their own. We must recognize that at the present stage the international community of States has not yet developed an objective international yardstick for security. Defensive security remains defined in subjective terms.

The Latin word "securitas" means "a situation without fear or concern"; the Russian word for security, "bezopasnost", means "situation without danger". Both etymologies indicate that security in the antagonistic sense is a highly subjective notion. Such subjectivity is fuelled by many sources: historical traumata, geopolitical disparities, hegemonial concepts of security, ideological objectives and incompatible value perspectives. Let me phrase it very simply: co-operative security among potential parties to a conflict can only be achieved to the extent that we understand their reasons for active defensive armament. This understanding is by no means automatically synonymous with acceptance; it may even lead to an increased defence effort if the potential adversary on his part translates its supposed claim of defensive security into a political offensive. Those who consider the concept of co-operative security as an essential objective of our time — and my Government does — must also include into their considerations the elementary fact that States, on the basis of their individual analysis of danger and threat, are not prepared to forego their own defensive armament stance. In direct relation to the item on your agenda on the prevention of war, I see a unique opportunity of this Conference to help create the prerequisites for the gradual reform of one-sided security perspectives of States. We must all come to acknowledge that no country has a right to an absolute antagonistic or defensive security of its own — at the expense of others.

Once we succeed in breaking the vicious circle of suspicion and fear, of exaggerated perception of security needs, and the dynamics of the arms build-up resulting therefrom, then there are good prospects for a new beginning in the mutual relations of States.

This concept of co-operative security puts substantial demands on all of us. It requires that States or alliances recognize in another State or alliance the potential adversary, but also the potential partner; that we negotiate in good

(Mr. Mertes, Federal Republic of Germany)

faith without losing sight of defensive military necessities. It requires that in providing for our own armed security we also practise restraint, openness and calculability in the handling of military might.

Such broad perspectives, such a broad behavioural pattern of co-operative security, can only become reality when there is agreement on the most important ground rule for the peaceful co-habitation of States. All States must be prepared to respect, in word, but above all in deed, the strict legal prohibition under the United Nations Charter of the threat or use of force. Confidence and security cannot grow if the principle of non-use of force is not rigorously followed. There is only one exception: the inalienable right of individual and collective self-defence of States against armed attack, as defined in the Charter. Aside from it, no political objective, no legal view, no ideological conviction may justify the threat or use of force; and I hasten to add that the interdiction of force pertains to all forms of force, and to all categories of weapons, — conventional just as much as nuclear. I would also add that no matter how often we solemnly affirm our commitment to the principle of non-use of force, the true test of such a commitment lies in its practical realization, in sustained affirmative behaviour, that is to say, a rigorous observation of a comprehensive non-first use, covering all military means. It is the meaning of the Conference on Confidence Building and Disarmament in Europe to find solutions which give the principle of non-threat or use of force effect and expression.

The renunciation of force is of basic, essential importance in the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany. My Government wishes to render the principle of non-use of force more concrete. Over the last 35 years — and no change of government has produced a change in this respect — we have tried to steer a steady course of reliable, predictable and co-operative behaviour. In the field of disarmament my Government has attempted to make its contribution to consolidate further the basis for peace in Europe and in the World. We work for balanced, fair and verifiable agreements containing concrete measures of arms control and disarmament, and for the wide establishment of measures of confidence, both designed to attain enhanced security on the lowest possible level of armament. Disarmament is not an end in itself, but part of a larger co-operative endeavour, just as the search for peace cannot be reduced to military questions of armament and disarmament. Soldiers and weapons are the consequences and symptoms, not the sources, of political tensions and mistrust. Genuine confidence-building and genuine détente are therefore indispensable. Nevertheless, serious, persevering efforts for arms control and disarmament agreements are today an essential part in the overriding attempt of reshaping the behaviour of States in a more peaceful direction.

Peace — that means first of all the preservation of peace against any risk of war. We call it Friedenserhaltung. Peace — that means at the same time the shaping of peace without fear and need, based upon human rights and mutual confidence. We call it Friedensgestaltung. Disarmament as an expression of security by co-operation will play an increasing role in shaping both aspects of peace. The Federal Republic of Germany remains committed to balanced and verifiable disarmament wherever it can be reached.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Alois Mertes, for his important statement and for the words which he addressed to my country.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Ambassador Miloš V. Vojvoda.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia) (translated from Russian): Comrade, President, as I am taking the floor for the first time this month I should like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere congratulations to you on your assumption of the high position of President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July. The peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet Union and your personal abilities as an eminent diplomat and an experienced, long-standing participant in disarmament negotiations are a most reliable guarantee that the functions of President of our Conference during this period will be used most effectively in an effort to ensure that the major multilateral organ for disarmament negotiations moves forward from its present standstill and will at last set forth along the path leading to the achievement of concrete results. My delegation is prepared to lend you its full support in this effort, in keeping with the spirit of close and fraternal co-operation between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

[spoke in English]: May I also express the thanks of my delegation to the delegation of Sweden which so skillfully presided over the Conference during the month of June. Mrs. Theorin and Ambassador Ekéus spared no efforts in their search for ways and means to solve the remaining organizational problems of our work.

Since we are now well into the summer part of our session for this year it would, unfortunately, seem safe to conclude that, apparently, we have again failed to establish subsidiary bodies on such priority items as prevention of nuclear war, nuclear test ban, nuclear disarmament and prevention of an arms race in outer space. Obviously it is not from negligence or lack of attention, since the Conference spent many weeks in consultations and in various contact groups trying to come to an agreement on the wording of mandates for the proposed subsidiary bodies. Unfortunately, this effort was from the beginning doomed to failure since a couple of delegations confronted us with an impossible task to solve -- to provide subsidiary bodies with nice mandates, while at the same time not committing themselves to negotiating on specific measures of disarmament. My delegation fully shares what has been said to this effect by Ambassador Carasales of Argentina in his statement of 19 June. In fact, these seemingly technical and procedural matters are often very good indicators of a Government's approach to a given problem. If there is a readiness on all sides to solve a problem and negotiate on it, terms of reference usually emerge quite naturally and without any difficulty. Experience of past disarmament negotiations fully confirms that. On the other hand, serious problems in establishing mandates undoubtedly indicate, and this is the case in our Conference now, that some countries represented here would like to believe they are not interested in solving the problems we are addressing. I have deliberately said "would like to believe", since it is our firm opinion that if any country is afraid that it would lose something by agreeing on measures to prevent nuclear war, to stop nuclear testing or undertaking gradual nuclear disarmament, then the leaders of that country must be the victims of illusions that are extremely dangerous for the whole international community.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Perhaps one of the best illustrations in this respect could, in not so distant a future, come to us from beyond the limits of our planet. The arms race has not only intensified recently on the Earth but is threatening finally to penetrate into outer space. This development would have far-reaching consequences which we cannot even foresee now. But it is now already quite clear that, as was stated in the declaration of the Soviet Government of 29 June, "it would substantially raise the risk of the catastrophe of war and undermine the prospects for limitation and reduction of armaments in general".

The rapid development of space technology in recent years has confronted us with a situation which can be compared without exaggeration to a crossroads offering two diametrically opposite directions to follow. We should not have to think too much about which way to choose. It is enough to look at General Assembly resolution 38/70 or to listen carefully to statements pronounced in this room by the delegations from all regional groups. A responsible and realistic approach should prevail over shortsighted considerations of military planners tempted by new technological achievements. It is with deep concern that we notice that the latter approach still plays a decisive role in the formulation of United States policy with respect to outer space. The illusion of the development of an effective strategic defence system based in space is still nourished. The United States public is being generously fed with this illusion, while almost nothing is being said on the possible dangerous destabilizing effects of this programme, the "effectiveness" of which would be first apparent in undermining the existing agreements on the limitation of ABM systems.

This approach goes not only against the vital interests of other States, including the allies of the United States, but is clearly contrary to the interest of the United States itself. Obviously, United States legislators realize that, as was confirmed by the recent vote of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress for an amendment prohibiting appropriations for the tests of the United States anti-satellite weapons in space if the USSR and other countries abstain from carrying out such tests. We see this vote as closely connected with the assumption by the Soviet Union last year of a unilateral commitment not to put anti-satellite weapons in space as long as other States, including the United States, refrain from placing anti-satellite weapons of any type in space, which also covers test-launchings of these weapons. We also welcome the statement by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Konstantin Chernenko, of 11 June, that the moratorium announced by the Soviet Union remains in force and that it is regarded only as a first step toward the total prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, including the elimination of such systems already in existence. It was also proposed to the United States to start negotiations with a view to achieving an agreement to this effect.

My delegation would like to stress that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic supports fully the undertaking of bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations on this question and an early achievement of concrete results of those negotiations. We believe that these negotiations should be started as soon as possible, and their launching should not be complicated by raising other disarmament problems which, for the time being, cannot be solved for well-known reasons.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

My delegation welcomed the establishment this year of four subsidiary bodies. It was and continues to be ready to take active part in the work of all of them. Certainly, there are great differences in the activity and indeed in the momentary possibilities of individual Ad Hoc Committees. But we maintain that in all four Ad Hoc Committees useful results could be achieved if delegations from all groups of States displayed the necessary flexibility. A compromise approach limited to only some delegations and groups of delegations is not sufficient in a body of a multilateral nature.

The largest volume of work has been done, as usual in recent years, in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Although the spring activity of the three working groups established within the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons was marked to some extent by the delaying influence of some delegations, the groups finally managed to undertake at least some work with texts on the provisions of the future convention.

This trend seems to be continuing in the summer, with one improvement: no delegation is trying to misinterpret the wording of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, which happened frequently during the spring part of the session. But let it be noted that the progress is painfully slow. We are still witnessing the practice whereby some delegations ignore the positions of other delegations and persistently put forward their often maximalistic requirements without regard for the considerations of other delegations, and exceeding by far the real needs of the convention's implementation. Let me give you one example. The problem of initial declarations has already been discussed quite extensively within the Conference. It is clear that numerous delegations, including western ones, do not consider it necessary to indicate, apart from relatively detailed information on volume and types of chemical weapons, the precise location of these weapons too.

It so happens that chemical weapons are very often stored at military sites, relating not only to chemical warfare and having general importance for the maintenance of national security. Moreover, if a country wanted to hide some stockpiles of chemical weapons it would be much easier not to declare them. Various alternative proposals for the verification of stockpiles have been advanced. Nevertheless, some delegations stubbornly continue to press for the inclusion of description of localities in the initial declarations. Thus, an absolutely superfluous requirement continues to complicate unnecessarily negotiations on a given aspect.

In this connection I would like to stress that we fully understand the desire of the United States delegation to propagate its draft convention submitted by Vice-President Bush on 18 April. It is only natural that delegations defend their proposals. But we would expect the United States delegation to defend its proposal not only by the repetition of its provisions in the plenary or in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons but also by reacting to questions and comments of other delegations on the draft. In my statement of 26 April, I put forward some comments and drew attention to certain aspects which my delegation considers inadequate for inclusion in the future chemical weapons convention. We have already heard three statements by Ambassador Fields dedicated to the explanation of the United States draft convention. However, these statements merely amount to a restatement of basically understandable parts of the draft, while not responding to inquiries and comments of delegations. We also have not heard the slightest argument supporting the need for the concept of verification by "open invitation". Thus, comments on all weak points of the draft were ignored and these points were neither covered nor improved in the statements by Ambassador Fields.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Here I would like to say again, that we fail to see the logic, for example, of arbitrary scattering toxic chemicals and the precursors in Schedules A, B and C, as proposed in document CD/500 and explained by Ambassador Fields on 5 July. The construction of these schedules is clearly overly generous to the United States chemical weapons. In Schedule A we cannot find QL, which is the key precursor for the most dangerous chemical warfare agent VX which forms, as is well known, a substantial part of the United States chemical arsenals. This generosity, however, is not accorded to chemicals supposed to be important for the arsenals of other countries.

Much has been said in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons about confidence. The notion of confidence is not a simple one, but I do not intend to go into details now. I would simply like to stress that confidence, or lack of it, is the result of many factors. Thus, it can hardly inspire confidence that, as Scientific American of 26 April puts it: "... While Bush delivered the olive branch in Geneva, administration officials in Washington were cajoling Congress to break a 15-year moratorium on new chemical weapons and spend \$95 million to make binary nerve gas munitions ...". These weapons are certainly not meant to be put in a museum, if produced. The words of General Bernard Rogers, published in Jane's Defence Weekly recently, are quite clear in this regard. The NATO Commander-in-Chief considers that NATO should deploy binary rounds being developed in the United States; NATO needs both long-range rounds with a long-acting lethal chemical, which would be carried by bombers or as a missile warhead, and a shorter-range artillery shell loaded with a lethal chemical of shorter duration.

I would also like to say a few words on the activity of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. As this year's Chairman of that subsidiary body which we managed to re-establish only at the end of the spring part of the session, I intended to make maximum use of the time remaining for substantive work in line with the practice of last year when the prohibition of radiological weapons and the protection of nuclear facilities were discussed in two separate groups. However, right from the beginning of the summer part of the session the problem of the so-called linkage came into focus again and brought with it a number of organizational problems. We have finally decided not to create two working groups and to work within the plenary of the Ad Hoc Committee, but we still have to reach agreement on the framework within which we should address the two problems. In spite of these procedural difficulties we succeeded in dedicating several meetings to substantive work. Two new documents were introduced by the delegations of Sweden and the United Kingdom, respectively, and a first exchange of views on these documents was undertaken.

Apart from the position of my delegation, to which I shall refer later, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee I would very much prefer if we could consider the problem of the prohibition of radiological weapons and that of the protection of nuclear facilities separately, on their own merits. It would give us a chance to take up where we stopped last year and to make use of the results of the last two years of activity in this field. I realize that these results were not very impressive, but at least a number of problems were clarified which could create a basis for further efforts to solve these two problems. I am interested in organizing our work so that each delegation is free to express itself on all problems it deems relevant to the subject-matter. I would, however, prefer to have a structured discussion so that at the end of the session we see clearly where we stand. Some interesting proposals for our programme of work were advanced recently, and it is my intention to find out at the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee whether they could meet with consensus.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

As for the position of my delegation on the problem, it proceeds from the fact that the prohibition of radiological weapons is a question of a basically different nature than that of the protection of nuclear facilities. These two important problems differ as far as technical nature as well as military and legal background are concerned. Within the prohibition of radiological weapons we shall take into account the possibility of creating concrete weapons in the full sense of the word. They would comprise radioactive material with an optimum half-life of decay, which has to be produced and stored, as well as the necessary munitions, devices and equipment which would also have to be produced and stored. The final weapons could hypothetically be prepared for use, transported and used. All these characteristics render the question of the prohibition of radiological weapons a typical disarmament problem with a possibility for appropriate verification measures.

On the other hand, the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities is of a different nature, since it amounts only to a problem of non-use of force against certain objects or installations. Since there is no possibility of applying the same measures of compliance and verification to the prohibition of radiological weapons as well as to the material and technical pre-conditions of a possible attack against nuclear facilities, the latter problem should be treated with a completely different approach.

Let me say in conclusion that my delegation is seriously concerned at the fact that concrete results of our common work are not at hand even during this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament. We fully realize that a standstill in disarmament negotiations can by no means be regarded simply as a static lack of progress. In view of the present accelerated and unprecedented build-up in armaments, doing nothing equals moving backwards, since with each new type of weapon being introduced into arsenals it will be more and more difficult, if not impossible, to stop and reverse the arms race. The responsibility for the perpetuation of the arms race remains with those who do not respond to the sincere proposals of others aimed at breaking the vicious circle of the arms race and at achieving real disarmament measures. Our Conference, more than any other body on disarmament, has witnessed numerous initiatives in this respect. My country is the co-author of many of them. They are all still on the table, although, unfortunately, many are covered by a thick layer of dust, waiting for an appropriate answer.

Before concluding I would like to express the happiness of my delegation at the fact that at today's meeting we were able to hear the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We shall study his statement, as much as that of the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Mertes, which, in all sincerity, they deserve.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for his statement and for the warm words addressed to my country and myself personally.

I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Mr. Rowe.

Mr. ROWE (Australia): Mr. President, on behalf of the Australian delegation I wish to extend a warm welcome to the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, who has addressed us this morning. It has been an honour for our Conference that the Secretary-General has come to Geneva to talk to us and particularly so that we may hear his views on the important matters which are the subject of our work. We endorse his call for the need to intensify our efforts towards the goal of disarmament, and we believe that his statement should be given very careful consideration.

I also wish to welcome the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Mertes.

Mr. President, I know that my Ambassador will wish to welcome your assumption of the Presidency personally when he returns to Geneva shortly. On this occasion, however, I wish to assure you of the Australian delegation's full co-operation in furthering progress on the many important items on the Conference's agenda during July. We are confident that your experience and skill will greatly assist us in furthering our work.

I would also like to express our sincere appreciation for the way in which Mrs. Theorin and Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden guided our work during June. We appreciate the considerable efforts which they and other members of their delegation made to achieve progress. This is an approach which Ambassador Ekéus is ably continuing in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

The Australian delegation is inscribed on the speaker's list today to address the subject scheduled for this week -- that of chemical weapons.

Hardly a plenary meeting goes by without some speaker emphasizing that this body, the Conference on Disarmament, is a multilateral negotiating forum. My delegation shares the regrets of those delegations which lament the fact that so little negotiating is, in fact, taking place. We are pleased, however, to note that chemical weapons is one area where such negotiations are currently under way.

It is of the essence of negotiation that one seeks to define clearly the areas where consensus has been reached and, then, to consider remaining areas of divergence with a view to achieving compromise or agreement. Unfortunately, this does not always seem to be the case in our present negotiations. I am thinking particularly of areas where consensus has been reached only to be eroded.

I am also thinking of instances where a number of cogent arguments in favour of positions have been put forward by different delegates and other delegations have refused to address or to rebut these arguments. Accusations that one or another delegation is specifically at fault in this regard are, in our view, pointless. The point really is that we should simply, all of us, participate in the negotiation in a positive and constructive manner.

There is an urgent need to make progress in the chemical weapons convention. We must make every effort to resolve those areas of the future convention on which divergences of view remain: that must be our priority. We have an opportunity to demonstrate the capability of the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate -- to negotiate a treaty as important and as complex as the chemical weapons convention. It is an opportunity that must not be missed.

(Mr. Rowe, Australia)

I referred earlier to areas of agreement and areas of divergence. In our work on this convention we have established agreement on the principles governing most areas. We have agreed, primarily, that the purpose of the convention is to make it impossible for the peoples of the world to use chemical weapons to wage chemical warfare. To achieve this, we are in agreement that the single most important step is the destruction of existing stockpiles and facilities. This destruction should start as soon as possible after entry into force of the convention and be completed within 10 years. Destruction must also proceed according to a schedule to be determined, and must encompass a balanced reduction in the capability of States to carry out chemical warfare.

Thus far we are in agreement. However, the countries of the world need to be assured that the purpose of the convention has been fulfilled, and to this end each stage of the destruction process must be verified.

As we have said the measure of agreement that exists already is quite considerable. This could be extended if thought were given to what may be called the interdependence of all aspects of the destruction of chemical warfare stocks and facilities.

Destruction must be: verifiable; balanced; complete; and it must be carried out in a manner that is visible to the countries of the world.

This will only be possible if declarations and plans for destruction are detailed as to quantity, type, location, etc. Time-tables for destruction cannot be worked out in vacuo but must be based on detailed knowledge of what exists, where it is, and how it will be destroyed.

Provisional plans for destruction will be deposited with the Consultative Committee soon after entry into force. It would seem logical, however, for these plans to be revised by the Consultative Committee, in order to fulfil the requirement for a verifiable, balanced, complete and visible destruction to take place. Thus, States possessing chemical weapons should expect the Consultative Committee or its executive body to revise time-tables, and specify verification procedures. This type of revision will only be possible after entry into force, when all details of stocks and facilities are available to the Consultative Committee.

General principles relating to a phased and balanced destruction can be negotiated and laid down in the convention. However, detailed plans and time-tables must be achieved by consultation between the Consultative Committee and those States which possess chemical weapons. Detailed plans must be based on a detailed knowledge of what is to be destroyed.

The principle of a balanced destruction of stockpiles and production facilities, so as not to afford any State a temporary military advantage, is accepted. However, States not possessing chemical weapons will be to some degree at a military disadvantage until the process of destruction is complete. These States will be interested to

(Mr. Rowe, Australia)

ensure that the chemical capacity of States possessing these weapons is reduced as fast as possible. The concept of a balanced destruction of chemical stockpiles between possessor States could be fulfilled if old, obsolete stocks were destroyed first. Such a procedure would, however, be unacceptable to States not possessing such weapons, since the early years of implementation of the convention would involve very little reduction in chemical capability.

The equation for the phased destruction of stockpiles and facilities will be very complex. A prime consideration must be that chemical capability is reduced as rapidly as possible. Thus, operational weapons and operational facilities must be destroyed early in the period of implementation of the convention.

Where obsolete stocks present a hazard to the environment, they should be disposed of expeditiously. It is to be hoped that the destruction of such stocks will not await the entry into force of the convention.

We are aware from Workshops held in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany, which have made a valuable contribution to the work of this Conference, that such stocks are at present in the process of destruction. It is conceivable that obsolete stocks may be largely destroyed before entry into force. Should this be so, it would reduce the complexity of the equation needed to bring about a phased and balanced reduction in chemical capacity. There is also the obvious corollary that if obsolete stocks are destroyed prior to entry into force, this would substantially reduce the burden of verification.

We must exercise ingenuity in devising effective regimes which produce the minimum degree of intrusion and the minimum effort in terms of manpower. This aim is achievable, but an effective regime must be based on the maximum amount of information possible.

The power of computer techniques is such that it would be possible for an executive subgroup of the Consultative Committee to store all data relevant to the process of destruction. It would then be possible to follow this process, and interrogate on-site computers as appropriate.

Much thought will be required to set up appropriate procedures, which to date we have addressed only in rather general terms. It seems self-evident that verification will be effective and not unduly burdensome if procedures are worked out on as complete a data base as is possible. This will require a maximum frankness and openness in the early stages of the convention. States are accustomed to thinking of national security in terms of protection of information private to the State. In the situation presented by the convention, national security will be best served by full and detailed declarations.

(Mr. Rowe, Australia)

The maintenance of a central computerized data bank would ensure that all States parties can follow the orderly process of destruction. Regular updating by remote sensing techniques, verified by reports from inspection teams, would monitor all stages. The computer-controlled process which we envisage would be similar to that used by manufacturing industry. The techniques are known, and can be adapted to the requirements of the Consultative Committee.

At this point, it may be asked whether the computerized control of the destruction process would obviate the need for continuous on-site inspection. Such an idea would involve a misconception of the capability of computers. Computers are an extension of the human mind, not a substitute for it. They can reduce manpower requirements, and should do so in the situation of verification of destruction. They cannot, however, replace it. In particular, these techniques should reduce anxieties as to compliance, and therefore reduce the number of challenge inspections. However, the continuous presence of the human intelligence in the form of an inspection team will not be obviated by even the most sophisticated monitoring regime. Verification would be greatly simplified if this style of control were implemented.

In summary, my delegation is suggesting that the process of destruction should be controlled by a centralized computer facility. To be effective this will require that the maximum amount of information regarding stockpiles and facilities be available when the programmes are written.

In conclusion, the Australian delegation wishes to emphasize and recognize that the tasks of monitoring of destruction and the verification of compliance of a convention are extremely complex ones. It is essential that we meet the challenge and seek practical solutions. Our intervention will, we hope, provide a basis for discussion of some aspects of these tasks. We can make progress through constructive dialogue on these and other issues.

The delegation of the United States has recently made several very useful and informative statements in the plenary concerning the current status of the issues involved in a chemical weapons ban and explaining how the United States draft convention approaches each of these. These statements have been a positive contribution to the work of the Conference. It is our hope that other delegations will put forward proposals which are equally well defined and relevant to the negotiation of a comprehensive convention.

For our part, the Australian delegation intends to continue to participate actively in these negotiations. The Australian Government is committed to the conclusion of a convention which will eliminate chemical weapons -- a convention which will ensure that chemical weapons can never again be used.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the representative of Australia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium, Ambassador Depasse.

Mr. DEPASSE (Belgium) (translated from French) [spoke in Russian]: Mr. President, following the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany and my colleague from Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda, who have spoken in Russian, I have ventured to do likewise in a spirit of socialist emulation, to convey to you our best wishes and congratulations on your new responsibilities. We have already admired the determination and speed which you have displayed at the very outset of your Presidency for this month. We wish you all the best, good health and every success in your work. We are aware that your successes will be the successes also of your predecessors, our colleague from Sweden, Ambassador Ekéus, our colleague from Sri Lanka, our colleague from Romania, and our colleague from Poland, who have all made very great efforts which have not always achieved the results they would have wished. However, the success you achieve will, of course, be the result of the work of all the presidents who have succeeded one another here with great distinction.

[spoke in French]: It is obviously with great modesty that I take the floor today following the weighty addresses made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by the Minister of State, Mr. Alois Mertes, and I think that we should all pay tribute to their elevated thoughts. I should also like to welcome here the new Ambassador of the Netherlands, my Benelux fellow, if I may put it that way, to whom Belgium is linked by particularly long and particularly affectionate bonds.

We have heard in recent days a series of repetitious, simplistic and accusatory statements whose tenor is that, to paraphrase the French fabulist, the black sheep which is the source of all our problems — the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament — is the United States of America, together with its allies, to some extent.

This sort of simplifying synthesis is deeply unsatisfactory. All the advances of modern sociology, political science and history — to which Marxism has made a very significant contribution — tend towards grasping the infinite complexity of contemporary political situations. To seek to describe them in ready-made, I would even be tempted to say narrowly dogmatic, formulas is to forget that "anything which is excessive is insignificant" as Talleyrand said.

I, or my Western colleagues, could begin all over again from the very beginning, put forward the Western interpretation of present tensions, try to attribute responsibilities, distinguish certainty from supposition, take note of emphasis and outline shades of meaning. However, this has been done hundreds of times in official documents and in scientific analyses which anyone seeking edification may read.

The fact is, however, that the Conference on Disarmament is neither a political science faculty nor a deliberative body, nor indeed a people's court, but a negotiating body. Our purpose is not to identify the guilty —

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

we know full well the lengths to which the obsession to ascribe guilt has led some States in the recent past — but to search for multilaterally acceptable solutions to the disarmament problems entrusted to us.

Of these disarmament issues, it is chemical weapons that is on the agenda for today's meeting, and I shall now address that question. It is an issue which is not only on the agenda for today's meeting but which, following the shocking events which have recently occurred in the Gulf war, is acquiring a tragic dimension which should lead some of us to make every effort to find a solution as rapidly as possible. In this connection, of course, I must once again pay tribute to Chairman Ekéus, who has devoted himself unstintingly to this objective, and I should like to tell him how grateful we are.

Belgium believes that all the conditions currently exist to bring the negotiations on chemical weapons to a successful conclusion.

With regard to substance, major proposals are on the table. The United States has submitted the most complete draft treaty to be presented so far, and our colleague from the United States has declared that his proposal is negotiable in all its aspects, thus demonstrating his readiness to settle the issues which have not yet been resolved. In a series of statements here, he has been illustrating and spelling out the United States proposals, and also answering the questions which those proposals must have raised. Your country, Mr. President, the USSR, has made various proposals, some of which, in particular as regards the definition of the scope of the convention and the verification of the destruction of stocks, indicate a possibility of agreement.

With regard to the structure of the negotiations, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has set up three well-conceived Working Groups, thus making it possible to work methodically and study systematically the main aspects of the convention. The Chairmen of these Working Groups are experienced diplomats, and I pay tribute to their dedication and competence. I have in mind not only the Chairman seated behind me, Mr. Duarte, but also our other colleagues, who have impressed us by the energetic manner in which they are carrying out their functions.

Despite these favourable points, however, the state of the negotiations is unsatisfactory. With regard to substantive issues, the discussions for the most part amount to the reiteration of already familiar positions, which gives the impression that we are wandering in a kind of maze. As for the negotiating methods, they give an impression of nebulosity which prevents those concerned from obtaining a clear view of the present state of the problems entrusted to them.

In such complex negotiations, method is a crucial element of success. The structure of the convention has been agreed upon de facto since 1980. The Belgian delegation believes that it would be best to adhere to it, and henceforth focus the discussion on the remaining critical issues. I would venture to suggest that this should be done with the help, for example, of documents giving a clear synopsis of the alternative proposals on the fundamental questions outstanding. I suggest that the Chairmen of the three Working Groups should be systematically associated with the multilateral negotiations at all levels.

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

At the risk of incurring unpopularity here, I would also suggest that we should raise the question of the desirability of convening the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons after the closure of the session for this year and before the resumption of our work in 1985. There must be some way in which, during the very long period between September and February, useful meetings could be organized which could considerably speed up our work.

In any event, I think that it is essential to preserve what has been achieved in our work over the last four years. One solution would be that the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons on its 1984 session should systematically add to the 1983 report, issued as document CD/416, and I would recommend this suggestion to Ambassador Ekéus. We would thus begin the 1985 session on the firm basis of the results already achieved, thus motivating ourselves rather than becoming demoralized by the awareness that the work of one session is largely neglected at the next.

The problem of verification is obviously a key issue. Here, as elsewhere, as regards verification, a subject which is inherent in all disarmament negotiations, the difficulty is to reconcile the situation of an open society, such as ours, with the situation of a closed society, that of the Eastern countries. We all know that there is virtually no possibility that a serious violation of the convention would not immediately be detected in our Western societies. On the contrary, the secrecy characteristic of the Eastern countries warrants suspecting the worst as much as hoping for the best: however, we must concern ourselves with the worst-case hypothesis. When the security of our States and the freedom of our citizens are at stake, we must be able to guarantee to our peoples that the other party has, without any possible doubt, performed to the letter the obligations it has undertaken, and that the two situations are symmetrical as regards security.

I should like to add here that the quotation which our colleague from Czechoslovakia has just made from General Rogers' statement did not seem to me to be complete. General Rogers, whose statement I read but do not have before my eyes, pointed out that if the negotiations on a chemical-weapons ban failed, it was necessary for the Atlantic Command also to have modern chemical weapons. I do not think that he went beyond that. He adopted the pessimistic hypothesis that our negotiations might fail.

The convention on chemical weapons must therefore have effective verification machinery. Such machinery must operate on two levels. The first is that of systematic on-site international verification: this concerns the entire process of elimination of stocks of chemical weapons and chemical weapon production facilities. It is also necessary, with different modalities, to ensure that chemical weapons are not produced in civilian industry. So far the negotiations have only seriously tackled the question of the verification of the elimination of stocks of chemical weapons. I believe that it is high time that the other two aspects of the problem were also tackled.

The second concerns verification in case of suspicion or complaint by one State party with regard to another. There is no question, in our opinion, of impinging on the national sovereignty of States by providing for a system of verification at will, in which States would have immediately to submit,

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

without argument, to arbitrary checks dreamed up by meddling inspectors. It will be necessary to establish objective conditions, time periods, and prior consultations to be specified in the current negotiations. We must also be aware that the final consequence of a refusal of international on-site inspection (a refusal, and therefore a hypothesis, that cannot be ruled out) at the request of the Consultative Committee following a complaint, could be the denunciation of the treaty. This seems to be the balance of the respective legal obligations.

On these difficult issues, for which greater serenity should prevail in the negotiations, we consider it essential that dialogue be resumed between the two major Powers possessing chemical weapons. We welcomed the offer made by Vice-President Bush for the holding of bilateral consultations on this subject with the Soviet Union.

Belgium believes that bilateral consultations between the Soviet Union and the United States on disarmament are a demonstration of those two States' awareness of their outstanding responsibilities for the maintenance of peace. These negotiations cannot fail to benefit multilateral negotiations, and such bilateral consultations between the Soviet Union and the United States are therefore always to be encouraged, in our opinion.

I have devoted the bulk of this statement to the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. I should nevertheless like to say a few words concerning the nuclear-test ban, and I am a little saddened and surprised that I am, I believe, the first speaker here to refer to the statement made here on 12 June by Mr. Shintaro Abe, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

I think that if we are realistic we all know that an agreement on a complete nuclear-test ban cannot be achieved today. The Japanese proposal for the prohibition of underground nuclear tests whose strength exceeds a verifiability threshold could constitute a temporary evolving measure whereby we would gradually draw closer to the ideal objective of a complete ban.

Belgium endorses the motives underlying the Japanese proposal: to pursue the process leading to a complete nuclear test ban, and go beyond the contradiction between verification and prohibition which reminds me of the story of the chicken and the egg.

From the same standpoint, Belgium supports the proposal of its Western partners to set up an ad hoc committee whose terms of reference would enable it to consider all aspects of a complete test ban with a view to the negotiation of a treaty on this issue. We believe that in its present wording the draft mandate would make it perfectly possible to consider the Japanese proposal, with all the interest attaching to an initiative put forward by the only State which knows what a nuclear attack signifies, and which has always expressed this knowledge with stunning dignity.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian): I thank the representative of Belgium for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to speak?

As announced at the opening of the resumed plenary, I intend now to adjourn the plenary meeting and convene an informal meeting of the Conference, which I hope will not be a long one, in a few minutes time.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 12 July at 10.30 a.m. The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.