

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.260
18 April 1984
ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTIETH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Wednesday, 18 April 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. J. Dhanapala

(Sri Lanka)

GE.84-61683

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. B. OULD-ROUIS

Mr. A. TAFFAR

Mr. A. BOUBAZINE

Argentina:

Mr. J.J. CARASALES

Mr. R. GARCIA 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. K. TELLALOV

Mr. P. POPTCHEV

Mr. C. PRAMOV

Mr. N. MIHAILOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

U PE THEIN TIN

U THAN TUN

Canada:

Mr. G.R. SKINNER

China:

Mr. QIAN JIADONG

Ms. WANG SHIYUN

Mr. LIANG DEFENG

Mr. LI WEIMING

Mr. ZHANG WEIDONG

Mr. SUO KAIMING

Mr. LU MINGCHUN

Cuba: Mr. C. LECHUGA HEVIA
Mr. P. NUNEZ MOSQUERA

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

Egypt: Mr. S. AL FARARGI
Mr. I. HASSAN
Ms. W. BASSIM
Mr. A. MAHER ABBAS

Ethiopia: Ms. K. SINEGIORGIS
Mr. F. JOHANNES

France: Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. H. RENIE
Mr. G. MONTASSIER
COL. GESBERT

German Democratic Republic: Mr. H. ROSE
Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. F. SAYATZ
Mr. J. DEMBSKI
Mr. MARETZKI

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. W.-E. VON DEM HAGEN

Hungary: Mr. D. MEISZTER
Mr. F. GAJDA
Mr. T. TOTH

India: Mr. M. DUBEY
Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. S. SUTOWARDOYO
Mr. N. WISNOEMOERTI
Mrs. P. RAMADHAN
Mr. ANDRADJATI

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Mr. N. KAMYAB
Mr. J. ZAHIRNIA
Mr. SHAFI

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. G. ADORNI BRACCESI
Mr. L. FERRARI BRAVO
Mr. M. PAVESE

Japan:

Mr. M. IMAI
Mr. M. KONISHI
Mr. T. KAWAKITA
Mr. K. TANAKA
Mr. T. ISHIGURI

Kenya:

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Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Ms. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA

Mongolia:

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

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI
Mr. M. CHRAIBI
Mr. O. HILALE

Netherlands:

Mr. J. RAMAKER
Mr. R.J. AKKERMAN
Mr. A.J.J. OOMS

Nigeria:

Mr. O.O. GEORGE
Mr. J.O. OBOH
Mr. L.O. AKINDELE
Mr. C.V. UDEBIBIA
Mr. F. OKOH
Mr. F. ADESHIDA

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Mr. P. CANNOCK
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Poland:

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

Romania:

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

Sri Lanka:

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

Sweden:

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Ms. E. BONNIER
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Mr. J. LUNDIN
Mr. S. ALEMYR
Mr. L.E. WINGREN
Mrs. A.M. LAU

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV
Mr. P.Y. SKOMOROKHIN
Mr. S.V. KOBYSH
Mr. T.F. DMITRITCHEV
Mr. V.I. USTINOV
Mr. V.F. PRIAKHIN
Mr. L.A. NAUMOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE
Mr. L.J. MIDDLETON
Mr. J.F. GORDON
Mr. J.W.B. RICHARDS
Mr. D.A. SLINN

United States of America:

Mr. G. BUSH
Mr. L.G. FIELDS
Mr. N. CLYNE
Ms. M.E. HOINKES
Mr. N. CARRERA
Mr. R. HORNE
Mr. R. NORMAN
Mr. P. CORDEN
Mr. H. CALHOUN
Mr. C. PEARCY
Mr. J. PUCKETT
Ms. B. MURRAY
Ms. K. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. R. MIKULAK
Mr. C. WELLS
Mr. C. BAY

Venezuela:

Mr. T. LABRADOR-RUBIO
Mr. O. GARCÍA GARCÍA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. K. VIDAS
Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Ms. ESAKI EKANGA KABEYA

Director-General of the
United Nations Office at Geneva:

Mr. E. SUY

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: The plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

At the outset I wish to welcome the presence among us today of the distinguished Vice-President of the United States of America, the Honourable George Bush, who will address the Conference as the first speaker. The Honourable Mr. Bush addressed the Committee on Disarmament last year on 4 February and needs no introduction, not only because of his high office but also because of the number of important diplomatic posts he has held before, including the post of Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations. Several members of the Conference may have known him earlier and I am sure that all members join me in welcoming him again to address the Conference.

The Conference continues today its further consideration of outstanding matters, as stated in the programme of work adopted at the beginning of the session. 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 have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mongolia, Australia, Mexico, the German Democratic Republic and France.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the Vice-President of the United States of America, the Honourable George Bush.

Mr. BUSH (United States of America): Let me just first thank and pay my respects to those in the United Nations Organization, the Director-General and others, for the arrangements, for their wonderful way of receiving guests who put such inordinate pressures on the normal proceedings of this important Conference, and to you, Mr. President. I understand that there has been some accommodation of schedule to make it easier for me to come here and I am most grateful for that. And I should like to express to the Secretary-General of the Conference, my appreciation. And let me say that I regret that my schedule is such that, although I flew here last night, that when this is over I must leave for a press conference and fly right back to the United States. But that should in no way be interpreted as less than interest in the proceedings of this important Conference, but rather that the schedule dictates it. Our very able Ambassador, Ambassador Fields, and others will be here to follow-up and to discuss at the Conference's convenience some of the matters that I raise. You very generously mentioned, Mr. President, my having been here in February a year ago, and it is an honour to come before this Conference again today, on behalf of our President, to reaffirm our strong commitment to arms control.

And I have come to reaffirm, as well, a resolve that has dominated the American position in all arms control discussions over the last year: the resolve that the growth in the number of the most dreaded weapons of modern warfare must not simply be slowed; it must indeed be reversed. In the matter before us — chemical weapons — they must be totally banned.

I have brought with me today the latest expression of the firm United States resolve — a draft treaty banning entirely the possession, production, acquisition, retention or transfer of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

This draft treaty includes an entirely new concept for overcoming the great obstacle that has impeded progress in the past toward a full chemical weapons ban, namely, the obstacle of verification. This new concept is part of a package of sound and reasonable procedures to verify compliance with all the draft treaty's terms.

Except on close inspection, chemical weapons, these insidious chemical weapons, are virtually identical in appearance to ordinary weapons; plants for producing chemical weapons are difficult to distinguish from plants producing chemicals for industry and, in fact, some chemicals with peaceful utility are structurally similar to some chemicals that are used in warfare. So verification is particularly difficult with chemical weapons.

Our new concept is an arms control verification procedure that we call "open invitation". But before I outline this unprecedented procedure, let me review some of the concerns that have led the United States to propose such a step.

When I appeared before you in February last year, I quoted Franklin Roosevelt's comment that the use of chemical weapons "has been outlawed by the general opinion of civilized mankind".

Unfortunately, despite the horror that these weapons evoke in all decent men and women; despite specific prohibitions such as the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, there have been repeated instances of use over the past six decades, against combatants and innocent civilians alike -- always, I might note, against those least able to defend themselves, those least able to retaliate against such an attack.

In the last three years alone the world has heard of frequent violations of these agreements from such places as South-East Asia, Afghanistan and the Middle East, and one important reason that chemical weapons use continues is that neither the 1925 Geneva Protocol nor the 1972 Convention include any form of effective verification or enforcement.

Parties signed a piece of paper, attached some stamps and some seals of their own. Arsenals remained, ready for use against any who lacked a deterrent.

The United States has advocated reinforcement of the existing agreements. We, together with other countries, have long supported proposals to direct the Secretary-General of the United Nations to initiate investigations of reported violations.

We regret that some United Nations Members States have disputed the need for such investigations and have, to date, prevented or impeded enquiries. We believe that international investigations of this sort could serve as a step toward the kind of openness required for a comprehensive chemical weapons treaty that would work.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

Surely the consequences of the absence of effective verification, as seen in the reports of continued use of chemical weapons, can only provoke profound concern among all of us today:

First, there is this unspeakable horror visited upon the victims of such weapons, many of them innocents simply caught up in the path of war.

Second, the use of chemical weapons violates existing international agreements, and so undermines the arms control process.

Finally, and perhaps most disturbing, there is the chance that, as reports of use continue, the world might actually get callous, and hardened to this news. It might come numbly to accept these weapons and to abandon efforts to rid future generations of this peril.

We owe it to ourselves and to our children to prevent this from happening.

For more than a decade, the United States has exercised restraint in the field of chemical weapons, and we will continue to do so. We desire an arms control solution to the chemical weapons threat. But our restraint has not induced all other States to exercise comparable restraint, and this is why we are taking steps to prepare for the possibility that modern chemical weapons might have to be produced in the absence of a comprehensive ban. However, we must and we will do all we can to achieve a treaty that eliminates any need for new production.

The President asked me to come here again this year to stress the urgency of this issue. He believes that we must do all we can to eliminate the existing stocks of chemical weapons and the facilities that produce them. He wants to ensure that such weapons will never be developed or used again.

Now, to that end, the President has asked me to present to this Conference today the United States draft text of a comprehensive treaty banning chemical weapons, and I ask that this draft be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The provisions of the draft treaty closely follow the "detailed views" that my Government presented to this Conference last year, and they also incorporate the views of many other delegations which have given us the benefit of their thoughts.

This treaty would prohibit the development, the production, the stockpiling, the acquisition, the retention or the transfer of chemical weapons. The principal criterion for distinguishing between permitted and banned activities would be the purpose for which an activity is being conducted.

In recognition of the need for confidence in such an agreement, the draft also contains sound and reasonable procedures -- among these, "open invitation" inspections -- for verifying compliance with all its provisions.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

For a chemical weapons ban to work, each party must have confidence that the other parties are abiding by it. This elementary, commonsense principle is the essence of what we mean by verification. No sensible Government enters into those international contracts known as treaties unless it can ascertain -- or verify -- that it is getting what it contracted for.

Lack of effective verification and compliance mechanisms has been a major obstacle to achieving a true and effective ban on these weapons.

As I mentioned at the beginning, the technical similarities between chemical weapons production facilities and commercial production facilities, the similarity between chemical weapons agents and chemicals for peaceful uses, and the similarity between chemical munitions and conventional munitions makes discrimination impossible without very, very close observation.

And, perhaps most importantly, strict verification is needed to protect those who do not possess chemical weapons, or are willing to give them up, from those who might maintain possession surreptitiously.

The goal of our proposal is a treaty to require States to declare the sizes and locations of their chemical weapons stocks and their production facilities, to destroy the stocks and facilities and to foreswear creating any new chemical weapons.

If they are to sign such a contract, States must have confidence, in particular, that they can know:

First, that all stocks have been destroyed;

Second, that all declared production facilities have been destroyed;

Third, that the declared stocks really do constitute all the stocks;

And fourthly, that the declared facilities are all the facilities.

Without such firm assurance we cannot -- and I think everybody here knows this -- we cannot claim to have banned chemical weapons. In this regard, the United States Government has taken note of the Soviet Union's announced willingness to consider accepting the continuous stationing of international inspection teams at the locations where declared stockpiles are to be destroyed, and we welcome that.

We are encouraged by this recognition of the indispensability of on-site inspection, a matter that was tabled right here in this room, I think by Ambassador Issraelyan. The Soviet Union's announcement has advanced the negotiations toward establishing confidence in the first of the four critical requirements, that is, that all declared stocks be destroyed.

To address the second of the four criteria -- that all declared production facilities be destroyed -- we propose a similar continuous, on-site monitoring and periodic inspection.

The verification difficulties inherent in the problem of undeclared sites -- determining that there are no hidden stocks and no clandestine production facilities -- remain our most formidable challenge. It is formidable because the problem of undeclared sites can be resolved only if States commit themselves to a new, but absolutely necessary degree of openness.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

Let us face reality. Chemical weapons are not difficult to hide and are not difficult to produce in a clandestine manner. Many States have the capacity to do this. We can rid the world of these weapons only if we all make it difficult for anyone, for ourselves to do such things without detection.

The opportunity for undetected violations is the undoing of arms control. If that opportunity persists, it would render whatever chemical weapons ban we conclude illusory and really would set back the cause of peace.

And so, for that reason, the United States Government is putting forward the unprecedented "open invitation" verification proposal to which I referred earlier. As part of a chemical weapons ban, the United States is willing to join other parties in a mutual obligation to open for international inspection on short notice all of its military or government-owned or government-controlled facilities.

This pledge to an "open invitation" for inspections is not made lightly. We make it because it is indispensable to an effective chemical weapons ban. The essence of verification is deterrence of violations through the risk of detection. The "open invitation" procedures will increase the chances that violations will be detected and the chances that, in the event of violations, the evidence necessary for an appropriate international response can be collected. That is the heart of deterring violations.

If the international community recognizes that such a provision is the sine qua non of an effective chemical weapons ban and joins us in subscribing to it, we will not only have realized the noble longing for a treaty that actually bans chemical weapons, but we will have changed in an altogether salutary manner the way governments do business.

We will have set a bold example for overcoming barriers that impede effective arms control in other areas. And we will have engendered the kind of openness among nations that dissipates these ungrounded suspicions and allows peace to breathe and thrive.

We recognize that all governments have secrets. Some speak as if openness and effective verification cut against their interests alone. But openness entails burdens for every State, every single State, including the United States of America. Openness of the kind we are proposing for the chemical weapons ban would come at a price.

But an effective ban on chemical weapons requires this kind of "open invitation" inspections we propose. We, our President, the United States Government, are willing to pay the price of such openness. The enormous value of an effective ban warrants our doing so.

I know that the United States delegation to this body is eager for the process of negotiating a chemical weapons ban to begin to unfold. We hope and trust that the seriousness of this work, its urgency and perhaps most of all, the humane aspirations of the peoples represented here, will spur all in this Conference towards an early and successful agreement.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

We do not underestimate the difficulties that this task presents. I have said that the key to an effective convention -- a convention that could eliminate the possibility of chemical warfare forever -- is enforcement of compliance through effective verification.

Our emphasis on this point (and our "open invitation" verification proposal) springs from a desire that the ban work permanently and effectively, to provide the security that all of us seek.

The United States is encouraged that these negotiations to ban chemical weapons have already achieved broad international support. It is significant as well that the work on this treaty is widely recognized to offer a promising opportunity for enhancing not only East-West co-operation, but also co-operation among all nations.

Our delegation looks forward to serious consultations with the Soviet delegation, and to detailed discussions with all other participants, on the elaboration of these provisions and other necessary aspects of an effective agreement. Our aim in these negotiations will be a practical one -- to work hard and in good faith; to build a mutual confidence -- that, frankly, is lacking right now -- and to achieve real results.

The President has asked me and I saw him just before I left for Geneva, to assure you again that the American commitment to work for effective arms control extends to all of the work of this Conference and to reassure you that it extends to the work beyond this Conference as well. We are pleased to be making progress in the multilateral negotiations in Stockholm on confidence-building measures in Europe pleased to have resumed East-West talks in Vienna on reducing conventional forces in Europe.

Our commitment to results is equally strong on the all-important issue of nuclear arms control, where the United States believes it is essential to accelerate effective, verifiable agreements, and as I think most people here know, we also seek deep reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals and the greater international stability that would follow.

Here, today, I again invite the Soviet Union to return to the two nuclear arms negotiations it suspended five months ago and to resume with us the crucial task of reducing nuclear arms. The United States remains ready to explore all ideas, without preconditions, at any time that the Soviet Union chooses to renew the dialogue.

We feel strongly about it, and in this Conference whose day-to-day work is dedicated in a multilateral way to arms reduction, I feel that I had to make that point -- we are ready, here, bilaterally or whatever the form it takes.

As the President said in his 16 January address on United States-Soviet relations, "co-operation begins with communications". This concept is part of our entire approach to East-West relations and to all issues on the East-West agenda -- be it arms control, or regional problems, or human rights or an improvement in mutual understanding. We are ready -- as the President has made clear in word and action -- to tackle the difficult work of genuine co-operation.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

The United States has in fact reduced the over-all size of its own nuclear arsenals over the last two decades, but, we are ready to work for solutions and results -- in Geneva, in Vienna, in Stockholm or indeed in any place where men and women of good faith are willing to sit down and negotiate in earnest.

Since my visit here last year, the United States has laboured long and thought very carefully about the contents of this treaty. We really are hopeful that other countries will carefully study it and join us in serious negotiations.

I am saddened and disappointed that some -- without even seeing a draft -- have chosen to issue statements charging that the introduction of this treaty text here today is the result of some simple political motivation.

I hope that we can convince those who have those reservations, who have made those statements, that we are sincere and that they will come to see, through the negotiations, our sincerity. Isn't it time that we focused on the concrete, open and universal desire of all people for reducing the weapons and the risks of war?

The United States has repeatedly over the last several years demonstrated its determination not simply to slow the rate of growth of the world's arsenals, but to reduce these arsenals.

I mentioned that we have reduced the over-all size of our own nuclear arsenals over the last two decades I don't think a lot of people even in my own country understand this, but the number of nuclear weapons in the American inventory was one-third higher in 1967 than in 1983; while from 1960 to last year, United States nuclear megatonnage dropped by 75 per cent.

In the last year, we've heard a lot of talk about the NATO modernization programme. In 1979, the NATO countries decided to seek arms control negotiations, but in the absence of an arms control agreement, to deploy 572 Pershing II and Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles.

But agreement or no agreement, the NATO countries decided at the same time to remove 1,000 nuclear weapons from Europe, and these 1,000 weapons are now gone. Last year at Montebello, the NATO allies decided to reduce their arsenal by another 1,400 nuclear weapons. And whenever a Pershing-2 or Ground-Launched Cruise Missile is put in place, an existing weapon will be taken out of service.

The result of all this is that, in the absence of a treaty, NATO will deploy the entire 572 new missiles. NATO will still have removed five nuclear weapons for every one that has been added.

In the nuclear arms control talks over the last several years, the United States has sought multilateral agreements that would make even deeper cuts possible.

In the Intermediate Nuclear Force talks two and a half years ago, we proposed the "zero option". The "zero option" would eliminate the entire class of land-based INF missiles, and later, we indicated our willingness to agree to an interim step involving more limited reductions.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

In the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks which you are all familiar with, we proposed, nearly two years ago, a one-third reduction in the number of warheads on Soviet and American ballistic missiles. We subsequently also proposed alternative paths of "building-down" and of "trading-off" in order to move the negotiations forward.

We regret profoundly that the Soviet Union chose to leave, to walk out of the START and the INF negotiations, even while their unprecedented, and, unparalleled deployment of strategic and INF systems continued. We know that we are joined by others here at the Conference on Disarmament in urging the Soviet leaders to resume these important negotiations on which the world's hopes depend so much.

At the same time, we look forward to genuine progress in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions negotiations in Vienna, and in Stockholm at those important talks in the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

We seek effective and equitable cuts in the world's nuclear, conventional and chemical forces. We want to prevent their use and that is our goal and the determination to which we shall continue to dedicate ourselves.

We are determined that future generations will not look back on these and the other arms control negotiations of our time, as we look back on those of generations past, and shrug and say: "Of course all they did was, perhaps, to slow the pace of the arms race of that period. They didn't stop it, or reverse it — and they probably couldn't have". We want to do better than that.

In conclusion, let me just say something about chemical weapons. There is a need, as I said in these comments, to reduce tension. If ever in the history of mankind there was something on which people from every single country agreed, not us, Government officials, Excellencies or all of that, but let us put it in terms of the people. In my view, as a father and grandfather who is getting older, (I served with many of you around this table when I was a father but not a grandfather) in my view there is no difference between a family walking along the streets of Vladivostock or Leningrad, Peoria, Illinois, or Paris or London, Caracas, Belgrade or anywhere else — every single family, every child, if they know about it, is scared to death of chemical weapons. And we have come here today with a proposal that is very very broad. It reaches way out, goes way beyond what I would have believed my own country (we pride ourselves on openness), way beyond what we would have done a few years ago. A lot of that is in response to the feeling of people. I have travelled to Africa, people mentioned it there, in all these different continents there is concern about all kinds of things, East-West relations, nuclear weapons and all of this, but everywhere there is agreement on chemical weapons. That is why I personally sound like I do. But as the second highest official in the United States of America, I came to this Conference today. We are not suggesting there will be no criticism of what we have suggested. We are not saying that we are perfect, that everything must be exactly the way, and will end up exactly the way, that that treaty is drafted. But I just didn't want to leave here without telling some former colleagues, some new friends, some with whom my country may have differences, that we come here in a spirit of goodwill, and we came here trying to address ourselves to perhaps the most fundamental question on arms existing in the world today, that is, how do we, as civilized rational people, eliminate, ban in entirety, in a verifiable way, all chemical weapons from the face of the Earth?

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, the Soviet delegation welcomes the presence of the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. George Bush at today's meeting of the Conference. We have listened to his presentation of the viewpoint of the United States of America on some arms limitation issues. As the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Mr. K.U. Chernenko, stated: "Today too we are in favour of having normal, stable relations with the United States of America, relations based on equality, equal security and non-interference in each other's internal affairs".

In its statement the Soviet delegation would like to touch upon a question of great importance for any negotiations between States, including those on the issue of arms limitation. We have in mind the problem of confidence between States. It is well known that international confidence has recently been considerably undermined as a result of the attempts of the United States to obtain unilateral military advantages to the detriment of the other side, the Soviet Union, spreading various kinds of doctrines and concepts substantiating the possibility of victory in nuclear war and the first use of nuclear weapons to this end. It is important now to undertake concrete steps in order to restore the atmosphere of international confidence.

Peace-loving rhetoric and assurances of a desire to improve relations alone do not suffice; what is needed is a readiness to back up words with practical deeds, constructive proposals taking into account also the position of the other side, of all the participants in the negotiations, and not only those stemming from one's own particular selfish interests. We are in favour of a dialogue, but a dialogue which is honest and business-like, aimed at the elaboration of agreements corresponding to the principle of equality and equal security. At the same time we are opposed to talk about dialogue for the purposes of propaganda and internal policy.

There are possibilities for starting to tackle the scores of outstanding world problems; there are many such possibilities. What is needed is the political will and determination to strive constructively, and not by words, for the normalization of the international situation.

One of the measures to strengthen mutual confidence in compliance with disarmament agreements, and thus international confidence, is verification, as is well known, and we would like to dwell on this in particular today. The Soviet concept of verification is based on the following: the main function of the system assuring compliance with the disarmament agreements, an integral part of which is verification, consists in ensuring confidence in their implementation by all parties to the agreements, and through certain forms of co-operation facilitating the settlement of disputes, thus providing for honest implementation by all States parties of their undertakings, and building confidence between them. The forms and conditions of verification or control envisaged in any specific agreement depend upon the purposes, scope and nature of a given agreement and are determined by them.

We approach the questions of verification concretely and not in terms of general declarations or abstract views. This approach of ours has been enshrined in the strategic arms limitation agreements, as well as in other existing agreements in the field of disarmament. Our policy on questions of verification is far-reaching.

Mr. Issraelyan (USSR)

As Comrade K.U. Chernenko stressed recently, "considering the policy and practice of the United States we are interested not less but probably more than the United States in reliable verification, in adequate concrete measures of arms limitation and disarmament".

The Soviet Union has made recently many far-reaching proposals on the verification problems concerning compliance with various arms limitation agreements. As an example let us take the negotiations on a chemical-weapon ban. During those negotiations we propose agreement on a whole range of different verification methods. These include national control, control with the employment of different national technical means, based on the latest scientific achievements, mandatory systematic or permanent international on-site verification, and finally the "challenge" inspections. Of course, the selection of any particular verification method is entirely determined by the goals of the chemical-weapon ban which it is intended to further. There is no universal system of control: each verification method must be linked to a specific activity prohibited or permitted under the convention. We have no unjustified leaning in favour of any single verification method, and we do not play with verification in order in fact to block the negotiations. The complex approach of the USSR to the questions of verification of a chemical-weapon ban completely ensures, we are deeply convinced, the effective implementation of the future convention.

Experience of international negotiations confirms that the basis for the solution of verification problems always consists in whether or not different sides taking part in the negotiations have the political will to conclude an appropriate agreement. In spite of the great difficulties connected with the solution of complex verification problems, including technical problems, it turned out to be possible to conclude, for example, the strategic arms limitation treaties between the USSR and the United States, as well as the agreements on the limitation of underground tests of nuclear weapons, on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and the whole set of multilateral international agreements containing the relevant provisions on verification.

"I wish to emphasize most firmly" stated A.A. Gromyko at a press conference on 2 April 1983 -- that for the Soviet Union verification has never been a stumbling block for the implementation of agreements or negotiations in the course of agreements, though we have heard from the other side a great deal of demagogy on that score, particularly away from the negotiating table.

However, verification is impossible without appropriate agreements on the limitation of the arms race and disarmament. Just as disarmament is hardly probable without control, likewise there cannot be control without disarmament. It cannot be considered feasible, on the one hand, to block the elaboration of appropriate agreements in the field of disarmament, oppose negotiations and block appropriate mandates for subsidiary bodies, and, on the other, achieve agreements on verification measures.

The course pursued by the United States and the United Kingdom on the question of a nuclear-weapon-test ban can serve as an example of such a distorted approach to the verification problem. These countries continue to block negotiations aimed at achieving an agreement on a nuclear-test ban, while insisting at the same time on the continuation of the discussion of verification.

Mr. Issraelyan (USSR)

They tell us that the time for negotiations has not come, not everything is clear in the field of verification. We decisively disagree with this manner of approaching the question. We are convinced, and this is confirmed by many reports from various sources, including United States ones, that behind it there are plans for expanded nuclear-weapon testing with a view to the development of new types of nuclear arms. In our opinion all problems of verification, without exception, could be solved during appropriate negotiations if all sides display political will to achieve an agreement. In order to show once again our goodwill, the Soviet delegation would like today to state the following.

In the event that the mandate of the Conference's subsidiary body on a nuclear-test ban is revised and the elaboration of a draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is begun, the Soviet Union would be ready to consider the possibility of organizing, as has been proposed by Sweden, the exchange of data on the radioactivity of air masses with the establishment of appropriate international data centres on the same basis as is envisaged in respect of the seismic data exchange. We could speak about this in detail within the framework of the subsidiary body.

It is not by chance that today we refer to the problem of a nuclear-test ban. Its solution will seriously hinder the qualitative nuclear-arms race, in particular the appearance of the most destabilizing types of such weapons, designed to carry out a first strike. One can therefore say that the cessation of tests without delay also reflects the military and political intentions of States, a kind of material expression of the readiness to renounce preparing for a nuclear attack. Finally, the renunciation of tests is also tantamount to verification of adherence to the non-proliferation regime, since conducting nuclear explosions represents a necessary link in the development of nuclear weapons. Under current conditions, the question of a nuclear-weapon-test ban has acquired particular importance and urgency.

Soviet policy in the field of arms limitation and disarmament, as in all other fields, is based on principle and is not subject to the fluctuations of expediency.

It is the Leninist policy of peace and friendship with all States and peoples. One of its distinctive features is its active and initiatory character. This has once again been confirmed by the views of the Soviet Union on the questions of naval activity and naval arms limitation contained in the letter of the First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, A.A. Gromyko, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. This letter lays down a number of concrete proposals aimed at reducing military confrontation in the seas and oceans of our planet. At the request of the USSR delegation, the letter has been circulated as an official document of the Conference (CD/498).

We are convinced that there are many possibilities, including within the framework of the Conference, to reduce the threat of nuclear war through concrete deeds today, and to promote the improvement of the international situation. As was stressed by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade K.U. Chernenko, "The USSR will in full measure interact with all States which are ready by practical deeds to help to reduce international tension, to create an atmosphere of confidence in the world. In other words, with those who will really strive not for preparing war, but for strengthening the foundations of peace".

The Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Bush, primarily devoted his statement to commenting on the United States draft which we, naturally, will study as we study all documents brought before the Conference for its consideration. At the same time, he briefly touched on issues relating to the START and INF talks.

Mr. Issraelyan (USSR)

In this connection, I should like to refer to the statement of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade K.U. Chernenko:

"Of course, it is the bridling of the nuclear arms race that is of key importance to peace and the security of peoples. The Soviet Union's position on that issue is clear. We are against rivalry in building up nuclear arms arsenals. We were and remain proponents of the prohibition and elimination of all types of those weapons. Our proposals on this score were submitted long ago, both to the United Nations and to the Geneva Disarmament Committee, but discussion on them is being blocked by the United States and its allies.

As for Europe, we still stand for it being free from nuclear weapons, both medium-range and tactical ones.

We stand for both sides making the first major step in this direction without wasting time. In so doing, the Soviet Union has no intention of strengthening its security at the expense of others but wants equal security for all.

Regrettably, the United States has turned its participation in talks on this subject [the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe and the limitation and reduction of strategic arms] into a tool of propaganda to camouflage the arms race and cold war policy. We will not participate in this game. The Americans created obstacles to the talks both on 'European' and on strategic nuclear weapons by deploying their missiles in Europe. It is the removal of these obstacles (which would also remove the need for our measures taken in response). That offers the way to working out a mutually acceptable accord".

Consequently, the Soviet Union cannot regard the appeals addressed to us to renew talks, at the same time as the deployment of the Pershing II and Cruise missiles continues in western Europe and such weapons remain there, otherwise than as a manoeuvre designed to divert attention from the activities of the United States to upset the military balance between the USSR and the United States. Peace-loving rhetoric concerning negotiations and dialogue is not enough; what are required are genuine steps and acts, which would demonstrate the intention of the United States to conduct business with the USSR on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia), (translated from Russian): Allow me first to welcome you, the representative of friendly Sri Lanka, to the post of President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of April and to wish you success in your responsible office.

The Mongolian delegation expresses its thanks to Comrade I. Datcu, the Ambassador of Romania, for the great efforts he exerted as President of the Conference in March.

The Mongolian delegation would like to begin its statement today by referring to matters under the first item on our agenda.

The problem of complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests should, in our view, be counted as one of the highest priority issues in the field of nuclear disarmament. The earliest achievement of agreement on this problem would constitute an important measure of a material nature.

Mr. Erdembileg (Mongolia)

A comprehensive solution of the problem of a nuclear-test ban would block all channels of further refinement and proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form and would ultimately erect a reliable barrier to the escalation of the nuclear-arms race. Failing such a solution, the large-scale development and production of new, still more destructive types and systems of nuclear weapons will continue in future and the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war will steadily increase.

As is known, a group of socialist States, including Mongolia, recently submitted to the Conference on Disarmament working paper CD/484, in which it again stated its firm and decisive position on the question of prevention of nuclear war. The document covers the main areas in which the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are concentrating their consistent peace-loving efforts.

In this connection I should like to refer specifically to the important statement, approved at the recent session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, by the Soviet Government on its future activities in the field of foreign policy. The document states, in particular, that agreement among the nuclear-weapon Powers on the joint adoption of a certain set of norms to govern relations among them would play an especially important role in ridding mankind of the threat of nuclear war. As is known, this idea, which corresponds to the interest and hopes of all peoples, was put forward by the head of the Soviet State, K.U. Chernenko, in his statement to voters in Moscow on 2 March 1984.

In its statement, the Soviet Government reaffirmed, inter alia, its readiness and determination to seek ways of implementing the idea of a nuclear-weapon freeze, to intensify its efforts and to make use of all available possibilities of ensuring that the threat of the arms race spreading to outer space should cease to exist.

In our view, in the elaboration of measures on the freezing of nuclear weapons under appropriate verification, provision should be made, among other things, for measures on the establishment of a moratorium on all tests of nuclear weapons and on tests of new kinds and types of their delivery systems.

On the other hand, the socialist countries consider that the proclamation by all nuclear-weapon States of a moratorium on all nuclear explosions until the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests would assist the earliest elaboration of such a treaty.

The adoption of such measures would undoubtedly serve the cause of halting the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons and the development of ever new types and systems of such weapons and would assist the cause of limiting the arms race and reducing the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war.

It should also be added that there is urgent need for the adoption of decisive measures to strengthen the international regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form, which means not handing over such weapons or control over them to anybody, not to deploy them in the territory of countries where there are none and not to spread the nuclear-arms race to new spheres.

The Conference on Disarmament has, at earlier plenary meetings, considered and taken note of the Third Report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. We feel that since 1976 the Group of Seismic Experts has, on the whole, done useful work.

Mr. Erdembileg (Mongolia)

Its reports are important documents whose use will be indispensable in negotiations in connection with the elaboration of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

Technical issues involved in the elaboration of the appropriate provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, in particular those connected with the development of an international system of seismic data exchange, the establishment of International Data Centres, and the transmission of seismic data through communication channels of the World Meteorological Organization have, in our view, been dealt with in the most detailed manner. That, of course, is a positive element. On the other hand, we are put on our guard by the lack, in this multilateral negotiating forum, of any kind of serious negotiations on the elaboration of the treaty itself. This situation has arisen, first and foremost, as a result of the unwillingness of certain States to advance towards the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In order to cover up their reluctance, the representatives of the United States of America and the United Kingdom are deliberately over-emphasizing the question of the system of verification, whose importance is recognized by all the parties in favour of considering the substance of the matter. In short, persistent attempts are being made to impose upon the Conference on Disarmament a limited and curtailed mandate for its subsidiary body called upon to conduct negotiations on a comprehensive prohibition of nuclear tests.

In accordance with the recommendation of the United Nations General Assembly, a group of socialist countries and the Group of 21 continue to support the adoption of a mandate which would make it possible to embark without delay on negotiations with the aim of the elaboration of an appropriate international treaty. Two draft mandates have been presented, one by a group of socialist States (CD/434) and the other by the Group of 21 (CD/492). Despite these constructive efforts by delegations belonging to these two groups of countries, it has proved impossible, owing to the obstructionist position of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, to reach consensus on drafting a mandate and on the question of setting up an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban having a suitable mandate.

We are disturbed by the fact that China and France continue to stand aside from participating in the consideration of the substance of this important question.

I should like to stress that the delegations of socialist States, reaffirming their position of principle on questions of real disarmament proceeding from the need to reach agreement on radical measures towards the limitation and reduction of weapons on the just basis of the principle of equality and equal security, have always shown flexibility, taking account of mutual interests, and have striven to find a mutually acceptable solution.

In this connection, we note with satisfaction that in his statement at today's meeting the representative of the Soviet Union expressed readiness, in the event of the revision of the mandate of the Conference's subsidiary body on a nuclear-test ban and the beginning of the elaboration of a draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, to consider the possibility of organizing an exchange of data on the radioactivity of air masses with the establishment of appropriate international data centres.

Mr. Erdembileg (Mongolia)

We believe that this statement by the Soviet Union testifies yet again to its readiness to reach agreement on one of the priority issues on the Conference agenda.

Taking advantage of the opportunity given me today to speak at a plenary meeting, I should like to touch briefly upon the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons.

At the current session, the Conference on Disarmament, after prolonged and complicated consultations, at last re-established a subsidiary body which is now functioning under the name of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. A new mandate was agreed for this body, containing the provision "to start the full and complete process of negotiations, developing and working out the convention, except for its final drafting, taking into account all existing proposals and drafts as well as future initiatives with a view to giving the Conference a possibility to achieve an agreement as soon as possible". Such a mandate, we think, offers the possibility of starting an important new stage in negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

From the very beginning of this session of the Conference, the socialist countries have expressed their readiness to participate in the new stage of negotiations in a businesslike and constructive manner.

The socialist countries' approach of principle and their views on improving the effectiveness of the work of the Conference in the field of the prohibition of chemical weapons are reflected in specific terms in working paper CD/435.

Mention should also be made of the topical nature of the proposal by the Warsaw Treaty Member States to the States members of NATO on the question of freeing Europe of chemical weapons. Mongolia firmly believes that this initiative provides yet another vivid confirmation of the socialist countries' sincere desire to remove the threat of chemical warfare from the States and peoples of Europe and the whole world and to speed up the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

Evidence of its constructive and flexible position, genuine interest in making progress in negotiations and search for mutually acceptable solutions was the Soviet Union's readiness to give positive consideration to the proposal for the permanent presence of the representatives of international control at special facilities for the destruction of stocks.

In its statements the Mongolian delegation has repeatedly stressed the need for an approach to the definition of verification measures commensurate with the requirements of the future convention. It has been emphasized again and again that the socialist countries attach no less importance than, say, the western States to the exercise of effective control over compliance with the implementation of the future convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. They have proposed a very broad range of verification measures. These include, for example, national control, international inspection by challenge, systematic international inspection and, in certain cases, permanent on-site inspections. The Soviet Union's numerous proposals and initiatives on verification, which enjoy broad support in the negotiating body in question, are of great interest and significance in this respect.

Mr. Erdembileg (Mongolia)

We believe that a sensible approach is called for towards determining the most efficient verification systems. It is out of place to suggest that some States are concerned with verification, are ready for it and open to it from every point of view, while others think of nothing but preserving loopholes and violating the future convention. Participants in the negotiations are well aware of the unrealistic demands of the United States of America in control matters, demands which are divorced from the requirements of the future convention. Today in the Conference on Disarmament we heard the statement of the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. George Bush. The United States presented its views on a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The Mongolian delegation is prepared to study this document in order to determine its position concerning it.

We are forming the impression that certain western countries, under cover of a touching solicitude for commercial interests, are in fact trying to remove from the scope of control a potentially dangerous form of activity, namely, the production at commercial enterprises of the most up-to-date and dangerous varieties of chemical weapons. They claim that many hundreds of tons of the most super-toxic lethal chemicals, allegedly proposed for peaceful uses can be freely traded on the market.

The socialist countries propose that the production of super-toxic lethal chemicals for any permitted purpose whatsoever should be limited, for any State party, to one metric ton a year and that such production should be concentrated in a specialized facility. Such activities would be placed under strict international control. And what do the western countries propose? They are in favour of permitting the production of one ton of super-toxic lethal chemicals for anti-chemical protective purposes, and of imposing no limitation on the production of such chemicals in all other cases.

The socialist countries, anxious to find a way out of the genuinely difficult situation conditioned on the one hand by the emergence of binary weapons and the possibility of producing their components at practically any chemical plant and, on the other hand, by the inadmissibility of interference in the economic affairs of States, have submitted appropriate proposals. These amount to the complete exclusion from peaceful chemical production of one highly specific category of chemical compounds, namely, those containing the methyl-phosphorus bond. It is this category which, as it were, sustains all the most dangerous super-toxic lethal chemical weapons, including binary weapons, and this category is practically not used for peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to a fact of considerable significance. It has become known that the Pentagon is seeking a Congress appropriation for the production of binary weapons. It is planned to increase stockpiles of chemical munitions from 3 million to 5 million units and to build stockpiling bases outside the confines of the United States of America. Up to 10 billion dollars is to be spent on the implementation of this programme. We doubt whether anyone would deny that such actions are not compatible with the confidence building necessary for negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

In stating some of its views on the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons, the Mongolian delegation, like many others, is guided by a sincere desire to assist the progress of the Conference's efforts in connection with the elaboration of a future convention on the complete prohibition of this dangerous class of weapons of mass destruction.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): My delegation is inscribed on the list of speakers today to address the subject covered by the Vice-President of the United States of America, chemical weapons.

More than half a century ago, Australia acceded to the Geneva Protocol Prohibiting the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases. That action gave expression, in international law, to the abhorrence felt by the Australian people for this dreadful and indiscriminatory class of weapons.

The first involvement in wider international relations of the then newly unified Australian nation was by Australian troops who went to Europe in 1914-18, every one of them voluntarily, to assist in the defence of Europe. Many of those young Australians were gassed. They were amongst the first victims of the use of chemical weapons. That horrible experience endures indelibly in the Australian national consciousness and history. It was a deeply traumatic experience and it remains today a potent source of Australia's deep commitment against chemical weapons. These weapons are abhorrent. They must be outlawed and eliminated.

The Geneva Protocol was necessary and Australia continues to support it, but it must be recognised that the Geneva Protocol is an incomplete instrument. It fails, for example, to outlaw the development, production, or stock-piling of chemical weapons. These weapons continue to exist, reportedly in quantities and kinds greater than ever before. What is worse, these weapons continue to be used.

Four weeks ago the Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a team of experts to Iran to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons in the war in the Gulf. An Australian scientist was a member of that team. The experts' report was unambiguous, unanimous, and deeply disturbing. Mustard gas has been used in the Gulf war and, for the first time in documented history, a nerve agent has been used.

A new international convention preventing the use of chemical weapons and ensuring that such use is made impossible through the destruction of all chemical weapons is urgently required. The making of such a convention is a task of great magnitude. But it is a challenge we must accept.

The action of the Government of the United States in presenting to this Conference a comprehensive draft convention on chemical weapons picks up that challenge with courage and determination. The earnestness of the United States' intentions at this time has been demonstrated by the presence here today of the Vice-President of the United States of America. The length and detail of the document which has just been distributed and its presentation tell of the effort which has gone into its preparation.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

It is sometimes said that "politics is the art of the possible". In our view it is more important in politics and in history that an opportunity lost, or not recognized in time, can be an opportunity lost forever.

In the present case of chemical weapons, my Government believes that this Conference now faces an unprecedented opportunity. It is an opportunity, and a possibility, that we should not let slip through our fingers. Our peoples, and succeeding generations, would fail to understand if we did not grasp it.

We have a solid foundation for developing the final text of a chemical weapons convention such as is demanded by all members of this Conference.

The Soviet Union and the United States held extensive bilateral discussions on outlawing chemical weapons from 1976 to 1980. Those discussions produced agreement on many issues fundamental to an all-embracing ban on chemical weapons and this was communicated to the Committee on Disarmament in a joint paper at the time. The conference and its predecessor bodies have also worked for many years towards this convention.

During the last three or four years this process has been carried further. A great deal of constructive work towards a convention has been done within the Committee on Disarmament. Many Member States have made significant contributions. Well over 100 working documents covering many different aspects of matters essential to the convention have been tabled and discussed in this Conference.

This process of bilateral and multilateral consultation has produced an impressive degree of consensus on such matters as definitions, the prohibitions needed, the need to destroy weapons stocks and decommission production facilities, and the identification of activities which need to be regulated by the convention.

Just how far we have come towards common views can be seen from the significant area of accord between the Soviet Union's 1982 basic provisions for a chemical weapons convention presented to the Second Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament-- and the United States draft that has been tabled today. Both documents of course draw on the work and achievements of this Conference. Our work towards eliminating chemical weapons has now been given added impetus and relevance by this United States initiative.

What will be of critical importance is that all concerned resolve now to negotiate in good faith. That negotiation will necessarily raise many issues of real contention and concern. But because of the stakes at issue, because the weapons concerned are terrible, because the security of all of our peoples is involved, we must not be daunted by the size of the job.

Negotiation of this Convention is no less ambitious an undertaking than was the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its associated institutional arrangements. That Treaty and its mechanisms were successfully negotiated despite the difficulty of the enterprise. There were an abundance of sceptics who said it could not be done, but it has been done. That Treaty is in force in 124 nations and in the opinion of most of us it works well. Similarly with the chemical weapons convention; it can and it must be done.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

Australia believes that, for an effective chemical weapons convention, special emphasis must be given to three essential elements: first, an uncompromising prohibition of the use of chemical weapons; second, provision for the destruction of existing stocks of chemical weapons and for the prohibition of the future development and production of such weapons; third, a verification regime that will ensure that these treaty commitments are being honoured.

Rigorous standards will be involved, particularly in the area of verification. There can be no security in such a convention unless the means of verification of compliance with the convention are effective and seen to be effective. We must negotiate the verification provisions with great care.

We are aware that there are differing views on what arrangements for verification would be required to ensure confidence that the obligations of the convention are being observed. The United States draft is particularly valuable in pointing to the standard of verification needed for this purpose.

We appreciated the statement by the Soviet Ambassador to this Conference on 21 February, with regard to verification of the destruction of stock-piles. That statement addressed one of the difficulties in the area of verification. It seemed to indicate a willingness to find negotiated answers to the problems of verification and my delegation heard again with great interest today further clarification from the Soviet Ambassador on this point.

It is critical that we proceed further to extend these negotiations, particularly with regard to verification.

My Government believes that it is not beyond the ingenuity of the members of this Conference to find the required solutions to these problems, without compromising our respective national interests.

Australia deeply appreciates the political commitment expressed today by the Vice-President of the United States in presenting this draft and the stated willingness of the United States to enter into negotiations with full commitment and good faith.

We also deeply appreciate that this draft convention has been presented here to this Conference on Disarmament. That action confirms the stated and acknowledged role of this Conference. It validates a principle to which all members of this Conference are deeply attached, that arms control and disarmament agreements can be negotiated multilaterally and must be because the interests of all of us are involved.

Australia accepts the present challenge. It will not fail to seize the present opportunity. It will participate with all possible vigour, with its fellow members of this Conference, to bring into existence, as soon as possible, a convention which will ensure that chemical weapons are never again used and which will eliminate those weapons for all time.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): We have listened with the utmost interest to the statement made today by the distinguished representative of the United States, who, on this occasion, has been the Honourable George Bush, the country's Vice-President, on the frequently heralded draft convention for the elimination of chemical weapons. We propose to consider that important document with the care it deserves, and in due course we shall present here whatever observations appear desirable in that regard.

Concerning the issues relating to nuclear weapons to which Mr. Bush also referred, my delegation's position has been set out on various occasions and I shall not repeat it. I shall merely mention the opening meeting of 7 February, the 255th meeting on Tuesday, 3 April, at which, as it will be recalled, the Conference on Disarmament was unable to adopt the draft submitted by the Group of 21 on account of the negative attitude of two delegations, and the item concerning the cessation of any arms race in outer space, concerning which I expanded my initial remarks, made at the opening meeting, at the 258th meeting on Thursday, 12 April. The statements of a general nature made today by Vice-President Bush do not suggest that we may perhaps witness shortly a more positive attitude on concrete issues on the part of the United States.

Meanwhile, and taking advantage of the fact that the third item on our agenda covers not only the prevention of nuclear war in the strict sense but also "all related matters", I shall broadly describe, using the faculty allowed by rule 30 of the rules of procedure, some of the events we consider most pertinent in this regard which took place during the recent Latin American trip of the President of Mexico, Mr. Miguel de la Madrid.

That trip, which took place between 26 March and 7 April and covered five countries of the Latin American subcontinent -- chronologically, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Panama, in other words, the other three countries which together with Mexico form the so-called "Contadora Group", and Argentina and Brazil gave rise to a number of statements and agreements at the highest level which will certainly help to strengthen basic principles of international co-existence, such as those set out in paragraph 12 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Those principles are "respect for sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States", the faithful observance of which, moreover, is an essential condition for the achievement of one of the fundamental purposes of the United Nations Charter, namely, the self-determination of peoples.

I shall therefore review very briefly the statements and agreements to which I referred above.

At the dinner offered for him by the President of Colombia, His Excellency Belisario Betancur, on 25 March, the day of his arrival in Bogota, the Head of the Mexican Government stated inter alia:

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

"For the full exercise of our sovereignty, we must leave behind us the era of divergences, of submission to the hegemonic centres and the models which deny the originality of our historical and cultural heritage. Latin America has always been a grand design of liberation: the time has come to carry it out ...

In Central America, the flames of intervention are being fanned, but the conflicts in the area, in their origins and their long-term effects, are not the result of the East-West conflict. We demand that there should be no mystification of the facts...

We, the four countries of the Contadora Group, have proposed, through negotiation and dialogue, viable agreements aimed at reaching peace. We wish to eliminate tensions which have nothing to do with the root of the problem. We know the region well, and we know that without interference and with a genuine will for understanding such measures not only would avoid war but also could ensure the future stability and welfare of Central America. Contadora is a Latin American effort to resolve a Latin American conflict."

On the following day, 27 March, the two Presidents signed a joint declaration which stresses "the urgent need to foster an atmosphere of understanding which would help to reduce international tension" and reiterated "the need for the major Powers to conclude as rapidly as possible agreements on the limitation of strategic and intermediate-range weapons, and to undertake effectively to carry out general and complete disarmament under international control".

Further on, the joint declaration stresses that:

"The Presidents examined with particular attention the situation in Central America and carried out a broad review of the peace efforts undertaken by the Contadora Group, consisting of Panama and Venezuela as well as Colombia and Mexico. They reiterated their unswerving determination to continue their efforts for negotiated solutions and for full respect for the principles of non-intervention, the self-determination of peoples, the prohibition of the threat and use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and co-operation for development. They agreed that the Contadora process was the Latin American response to the options of force which threatened to make Central America the setting for a generalized struggle and an arena for confrontation between the Great Powers.

They stated that while that process had certainly helped to avert the outbreak of war in Central America and to generate the elements for an honourable and equitable negotiation, they remained seriously concerned at the increase in the foreign military presence, in the arms race, in destabilizing activities, in displays of force and the violation of human rights ...

They therefore urged the States which exercised political influence and provide military assistance in the area to refrain from carrying out actions which might accentuate antagonisms, and to lend their active collaboration to the process of building peace".

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

In the following stage of the trip to which I am referring, President de la Madrid arrived in Brazil, in whose capital, Brasilia, he stated on 30 March in his speech before the Brazilian Congress:

"In the face of the conflicts raging in Central America, our countries clearly and decidedly urge the option of dialogue and negotiation, which they oppose to acts of confrontation, destabilization and interference. They are also opposed to the artificial involvement in the confrontation between the super-Powers of a conflict rooted in economic backwardness and social inequality."

In the Brazilian capital on the same day a joint declaration was also signed by the Mexican Chief of State and the President of Brazil, His Excellency Joao Baptista Figueiredo, which contains the following:

"The Heads of State noted with concern the deterioration in the world political setting ... observing that, unfortunately, peace has become more precarious and political negotiations between the major Powers have in fact been interrupted ... The arms race is absorbing an increasing amount of resources which are thus removed from use on behalf of development. Intervention and destabilization activities, which largely worsen the atmosphere of international relations, are on the rise ...

They therefore reiterated the urgent need for the restoration of dialogue at all levels between the super-Powers and, in particular, that disarmament negotiations should be resumed, leading to the curbing of the arms race and allowing general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The entire international community should participate in these negotiations through the bodies set up for that purpose, particularly the Conference on Disarmament."

With regard to the situation in Central America and its prospects, the Presidents held a detailed dialogue, as a result of which:

"They noted that in recent months peace had been very seriously threatened and the risk of a regional conflict had increased. If the latter should occur, international peace and stability would be jeopardized and relations in the hemisphere would be irreparably damaged. Consequently, the two Presidents agreed to stress the importance of strengthening the efforts of the Contadora Group on behalf of peace, the allaying of tensions and the economic and social development of the Central American countries. The President of Brazil reiterated his Government's firm solidarity and support for such efforts ...

They noted that in view of the prospects of peace and understanding stemming from the activities of the Contadora Group, it was essential that all countries with interests in the region and the Central American countries themselves should refrain from carrying out actions which could jeopardize them or further worsen the situation ..."

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

In Buenos Aires, where he arrived on 2 April, in his speech at the dinner offered on 3 April by the President of the Argentine Republic, His Excellency Raul Ricardo Alfonsín, the President of Mexico stated:

"Mexico does not admit any kind of tutelage which jeopardizes the capacity of peoples for self-determination. On the other hand, it advocates subordination to the law and the use of peaceful means to settle disputes ...

In calling for a renewal of détente, dialogue and negotiation, we are affirming our right to live in concord and harmony. We do not accept being hostages of the confrontation between the super-Powers. We reject the condition of being mere spectators of our time, which the conflict of interests of the super-Powers seeks to impose upon us ...

Pacification in Central America cannot be separated from the Latin American approach of the countries promoting dialogue ... hence the importance and significance of the Argentine Government's endorsement of the approaches and the work of conciliation and diplomatic negotiation fostered by the Contadora Group.

In the face of the growing and inadmissible threats of intervention and the reiterated displays of the absurd force of bayonets in Central America, Argentina and Mexico reaffirm their unshakeable faith in the final and decisive victory of solidarity, law and justice."

On the following day, the two Heads of State issued a joint declaration in which, after referring to the "broad exchange of views they had had on the complex and dangerous situation in the world", they asserted "the independent nature of the foreign policy of their countries"; noted that "the policy of confrontation of the blocs is a threat to mankind and runs counter to the aspirations of self-determination and democracy of peoples"; and condemned the arms race, "particularly the acquisition and accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, stressing the incoherence of the super-Powers' strategy of deterrence and the irrationality of allocating vast resources for destruction, when urgent problems of development, and in many cases problems of survival, exist in large areas of the planet". In reviewing the present international situation, they reiterated "their unswerving belief that relations between States should be based on the strict observance of principles of international law and co-existence", and agreed that "halting the arms race and preventing nuclear war constitute a priority task for the present". They expressed their "profound concern at the danger inherent in the constant qualitative and quantitative increase in nuclear arsenals and their propagation around the world", and declared "their commitment to promote effective measures aimed at achieving the final goal of general and complete nuclear disarmament on a non-discriminatory basis".

The two Presidents carried out a thorough analysis of the situation in Central America, and "pointed out that the Central American crisis was the most

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disturbing problem on the immediate horizon" and therefore "there was an increasingly urgent need for solutions and channels of understanding which would eliminate the danger of an armed conflict, which, if it were to break out, would have repercussions for the stability and development of all the countries in the region and would irreparably damage relations in the hemisphere". Thus, they stressed "the fundamental role played by the Contadora Group which represents the Latin American response to what is clearly a regional problem". They recognize that "the acceptance by the Central American countries of the Document on Objectives, in September 1983, was a political commitment which had opened up real prospects for negotiation"; they expressed "their concern at the persistence of the intimidatory practices and destabilizing actions occurring daily, which were designed to impose a false military option and which hindered the work of the Contadora Group aimed at finding a just and honourable diplomatic solution for all parties", reiterating their "appeal to all countries with interests or links in Central America to suspend carrying out actions which would certainly aggravate the situation prevailing in the area".

Caracas was the fourth stop in the President of Mexico's itinerary. At the dinner offered for him on 5 April by his Venezuelan colleague, His Excellency Jaime Lusinchi, he said the following:

"A peaceful international atmosphere, free of tension and confrontation, is inconceivable if our region continues to be artificially converted into the battleground for alien conflicts, as is now the case in Central America...

"In Central America, through the Contadora Group, in which our countries participate together with Colombia and Panama, we are carrying out a sustained and tireless effort in the interests of peace, the alleviation of tension and development. We do not wish to see, in this area which is near to us and to our hearts, the outbreak of a conflict brought in from outside, but rather the common search for solutions, in solidarity, plurality and understanding. It is therefore particularly urgent that activities which exacerbate confrontation, jeopardize stability and hinder development, should be stopped."

As in the three previous cases, the visit to Venezuela culminated in the signing of a joint statement in which the two Heads of State noted that "East-West tension and the stagnation of North-South co-operation are aspects of the same, critical situation, which has a negative impact on the political and economic development of the developing countries". They pointed out that "the advance of the nuclear and conventional arms race was an affront which threatened survival and absorbed financial and technological resources which were essential for development"; while "the virtual breaking-off of effective political communication between the major Powers worsened the international atmosphere and narrowed the field of co-operation". In the face of this situation, they stressed "the need for all States, and especially the most powerful States, faithfully to observe the

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principles of non-intervention, self-determination of peoples, prohibition of the threat and use of force and peaceful settlement of dispute", as well as the need "to revitalize disarmament negotiations and make new efforts to alleviate existing tensions".

The Presidents examined the situation in Central America and noted that it entails very serious risks, since "events had occurred which, far from helping to alleviate tensions, tended to worsen them and to increase the danger of generalized conflict, which would affect the whole of the region and cause irreparable damage to relations in the hemisphere". The two Heads of State "reaffirmed their unshakeable will to continue, within the Contadora Group, the search for peaceful and negotiated solutions to the Central American conflict", stressing that "for that purpose it was essential to abandon the policy of destabilizing actions, frontier incidents and militarist projects which hindered the purposes of regional dialogue and conciliation. They also agreed on the urgent need for the countries with links and interests in the region to give effective support to the Contadora process, and that the Central American countries themselves should abide by the undertakings they had entered into when adopting the Document of Objectives, in order to consolidate the understandings and arrive at legal agreements which would finally establish an atmosphere of peace and co-operation".

Panama, whose Contadora island gave its name to the group of four Latin American countries formed there on 9 January 1983, was the country whose capital constituted the last stop on the President of Mexico's Latin American trip. On his arrival at "Omar Torrijos" airport on 7 April, he stated, when addressing his host, the President of the Republic of Panama, His Excellency Jorge Illueca:

"Latin America is currently facing problems and opportunities. The principle problem is the threat to peace in Central America ...

"Nothing durable, nothing healthy can be built on force and violence. Violence cannot be invoked to build democracy and freedom. Democracy and freedom need peace ...

"The solution of the Central American problem depends essentially on the political will of the Central American peoples and governments. This is the right which Mexico defends; this is the right which the Contadora Group affirms".

As a result of the broad exchange of opinions carried out, the two Heads of State on that day signed a joint communique in which, with regard to the world political situation, they deplored the deterioration in that situation and stressed the "need to restore the political dialogue between the Great Powers and to find channels of negotiation leading to a reconciliation of their differences and to achieving effective agreements, particularly in disarmament matters".

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With regard to the Central American situation, the two Presidents "agreed that the conflicts and disorders in the Central American countries were rooted in the economic, political and social conditions prevailing in each of them, and that it was unacceptable to set them in the framework of East-West confrontation". They expressed concern at the "intensification of the escalation of tension and conflict in Central America, destabilizing practices and the persistence of foreign interference and aggression which endangered international peace and security"; they stressed the importance, "for the purposes of pacification in the area, of the support given by the international community to the Contadora Group", considering it opportune to recall in that connection "the reiteration by the United Nations General Assembly of the right of all the Central American countries to live in peace and to determine their own future free from all foreign interference". They appealed both to the Central American governments and to "the countries with links and interests in the region to display by deeds their willingness to support the efforts of the Contadora Group".

The viewpoints expressed by the President of Mexico and the Presidents of the other five Latin American Republics he visited during his recent trip are so similar that it was possible without any difficulty to adopt the various joint declarations of which I have just quoted the paragraphs of greatest interest to such a body as the Conference on Disarmament.

The texts of those paragraphs are clearly what is usually described as self-explanatory. Nevertheless, I shall venture to emphasize that they clearly reflect the general opinion of all the Heads of State in question concerning the urgent need to restore the dialogue between the super-Powers and particularly to resume disarmament negotiations.

I also think it necessary to stress that, with regard to Central America, there is consensus in proclaiming that the conflicts and disorders in the area are rooted in the economic, political and social conditions of the countries concerned and have nothing to do with the East-West confrontation, as it is sometimes artificially claimed. It is therefore essential to desist from what are variously designated in the joint statements as "destabilizing actions", "intimidatory practices", or "militarist designs", and for the governments of those States "having links and interests in the region" or which "exercise political influence and provide military assistance" in the region to demonstrate through acts the support which they have proclaimed for the Contadora Group, and to refrain from any open or disguised interference in the affairs of the region.

As Mexico stated at the United Nations during the recent Security Council debates which culminated in the veto by one of its permanent members of a resolution which received 13 votes in favour, Mexico considers that the claim which has been made in Central America of "bringing about peace by making war"

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is absurd. Therefore, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, as members of the Contadora Group, met in Panama on the day following the end of the President of Mexico's trip, on 8 April, and adopted a communiqué which contains the following three paragraphs:

"They noted that during recent weeks the regional scene shows signs of serious deterioration. The activities of irregular forces, supported by supplies and communication centres located in the territory of neighbouring countries and aimed at destabilizing the governments of the area, have been stepped up. Sophisticated arms, novel military methods, and dangerous forms of attack have been introduced. Actions such as the mining of ports have been undertaken which damage the economy, disrupt trade and jeopardize the freedom of navigation.

They also noted with concern the increasingly overt presence of foreign troops and advisers, the heightening of the arms build-up, the proliferation of military actions and manoeuvres, all of which contribute to intensifying tension and increasing mistrust.

They therefore consider it essential for the countries with links and interests in the region to demonstrate by concrete acts the support they have expressed for the Contadora Group, emphasizing once again that a wider conflict would have profound repercussions on all the countries of the region and would affect the entire continent."

The soundness of these remarks is clear if it is borne in mind that legally Security Council resolution 530 (1983) is still in full force. The resolution was adopted by unanimity by the Council's 15 Permanent Members and non-permanent members on 19 May last year. It endorsed the appeal of the Contadora Group "in that the deliberations of the Council should strengthen the principles of self-determination and non-intervention in the affairs of other States, the obligation not to allow the territory of a State to be used to commit acts of aggression against another, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prohibition of the threat or use of force to resolve conflicts", and reaffirmed "the right of Nicaragua and all the countries of the region to live in peace and security free of external interference".

That is certainly why the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, in his recent visit to Mexico, after referring specifically to resolution 530 which I have just mentioned, made the following statement:

"The conviction of the Contadora Group that it is necessary to seek solutions through negotiation, and in them to envisage the fundamental roots, social as well as economic, of the problems, has set them on a sound course and will lead them to just results. Their rejection of any

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attempt to import into the region the factors of the present confrontation between East and West, with all its definitely negative repercussions, is also a matter for commendation. As Secretary-General, apart from my constant availability, my role, according to this resolution, is to support the Contadora Group, and to inform the Security Council."

As a member of this Group, whose activities for peace in Central America are based on "the observance of the principles of international law which govern the acts of States" and which were included in the so-called "Document of Objectives" adopted last September, Mexico is convinced that this right should be taken very seriously and that no attempt should ever be made, by sophistry and sleight of hand, to try to justify acts of State terrorism which are even more serious than individual terrorism.

That is why we venture to hope that the time may soon come for the implementation of the measures which the Contadora Group has promoted and which, as President Miguel de la Madrid recalled, in the message he addressed to his people on 9 April, on the occasion of his return to Mexico, are "the cessation of hostilities and of acts of war or preparations for war, the curbing of the arms build-up, the commitment of all countries of the region not to support subversion and destabilization in neighbouring countries, and the withdrawal of foreign military forces".

It should be borne in mind that the declarations and appeals in this connection which abound in the joint statements of the Latin American trip to which I have referred come from the highest-level spokesmen of six countries -- Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Panama and Mexico -- which represent 78 per cent of the surface area of Latin America and 75 per cent of its population, while their economies account for 77 per cent of the regional total. For those who consider statistics decisive or at least of capital importance, we believe that the above figures should encourage them not to treat these statements and exhortations lightly.

The PRESIDENT: There are two more speakers on my list, and in view of the lateness of the hour I propose to suspend the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament now and resume it at 3.30 p.m. Is there any objection? I hear none.

Before I suspend the Conference may I announce that the contact group meeting under agenda item number 5 will now not take place at 3.30 p.m. in Room C.108 as originally scheduled; it will take place after the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m. and reconvened at 3.30 p.m.

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

I have remaining on my list of speakers for today the German Democratic Republic and France.

I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Rose.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, today, my delegation would like to dwell upon agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

In the efforts for achieving international security and disarmament, developments in outer space have increasingly entered the minds of the peoples during the past few years. These developments are playing an ever more important role in the policy of States. The time is now ripe to set a course in the interest of peace. Either we will be able to maintain and strengthen freedom for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, to the benefit of all States, or outer space will be included in the arms race, with all its dangerous consequences.

The launching of the first artificial earth satellite by the Soviet Union almost 30 years ago opened up the age of practical exploration and use of outer space. Utopian ideas of former generations came true. In international treaties, States undertook to use outer space for peaceful purposes. People all over the world followed with great sympathy the sensational success of scientists and cosmonauts. New dimensions for co-operation between States having different social systems became apparent. In particular, the joint space venture of the USSR and the United States was regarded as a promising sign in this respect.

However, the United States is now doing an about-turn: it is undermining world-wide consensus on freedom and peace in outer space by including space in its adventurous policy. Relevant facts have already been outlined here; there is no need to repeat them. We share the view that such activities cannot be separated from the deployment of Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles as nuclear first-strike weapons in Europe. Our continent is regarded as a potential nuclear battlefield, whereas the United States should be shielded by a large-scale and space-based anti-ballistic missile system against a retaliatory strike. Those plans and actions are now as before dominated by the doctrine of a limited nuclear war proceeding from the assumption that such a war is wageable and winnable.

The extension of the arms race into outer space cannot be justified by any argument whatsoever. On Thursday last week, the delegation of the United States has reiterated pretexts, which it has put forward for years now, against the conclusion of international agreements.

We have the following observations to make upon that statement. Firstly, it is remarkable that the representative of the United States confined his statement to the question of anti-satellite systems, i.e., he referred only to one aspect of his country's military activities concerning outer space. Once again, the attempt was made to allege an advantageous position of the Soviet Union in this field. Only the naive can believe that, for instance, the Shuttle project has nothing to do with military activities including actions against satellites belonging to other States. We also recall that in 1979, the United States broke off negotiations with the Soviet Union on anti-satellite weapons. This is another proof of the endeavour

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to include outer space in the arms drive and war preparation. The rejection of all obligations likely to hinder this course is part and parcel of such a policy. The refusal to join the moratorium declared by the Soviet Union gives strong evidence of that conclusion.

Secondly, the delegation of the United States avoided any reference to the comprehensive plans known as the "Star Wars" concept which was proclaimed in March last year at the highest level, accompanied by a large propaganda campaign, and which became only recently, by Directive 119, a binding guideline of that country's policy. It stands to reason that in considering measures against an arms race in outer space, such dangerous plans deserve our special attention.

The following facts cannot be refuted. The creation of a space-based anti-ballistic missile system would upset the relationship between the limitation of strategic defensive and strategic offensive weapons and would thus inevitably increase the danger of nuclear war. This concern even became the subject of international agreements. The preamble of the Treaty between the United States and the USSR on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems of 26 May 1972 stresses that effective measures to limit anti-ballistic missile systems would lead to a decrease in the risk of outbreak of war involving nuclear weapons. That means, as a matter of logical thinking, that the envisaged anti-ballistic missile systems will render more probable a nuclear war. They are a firm part of a strategy of a nuclear first strike. This is in contradiction with international law. Article V, paragraph 1, of the aforementioned Treaty stipulates the fundamental obligation that "Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy anti-ballistic missile systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based -- I repeat space-based -- or mobile land-based." To our understanding, this is the basic norm of the Treaty, which has also to be the guideline for all the other concrete stipulations.

It cannot be contested that the Outer Space Treaty of 27 January 1967 stipulates the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Moreover, it assures each individual State the concrete right to take part in these activities without any discrimination. The militarization of outer space as strived for by the United States will inevitably result in this right being restrained or even abolished. Therefore, we associate ourselves with all those delegations which regard the planned activities as incompatible with the Outer Space Treaty.

It should be possible to prevent an arms race in outer space since almost all States in supporting resolution 38/70 of the latest General Assembly favoured negotiations on the issue. It is our hope that in the United States too comprehension that the militarization of outer space will not bring the desired military and political advantages will gain the upper hand. The only feasible way towards strengthening national and international security is the cessation of the arms race and gradual disarmament by means of international agreements.

At this Conference, different approaches to the question became evident. The great majority of delegations request the establishment of a Committee with a negotiating mandate, as already provided for in resolution 38/70, which was also supported by my country. There is no "false bottom" to our policy. We, therefore, advocate the consistent implementation of that resolution. This applies, above all, to operative paragraph 7.

We may ask, what are the elements still to be identified or examined in non-committal discussions concerning the prevention of an arms race in outer space as suggested by the delegation of the United States. We have at our disposal the text

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of a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, submitted by the Soviet Union. This treaty not only identifies all relevant problems but also offers concrete solutions. It fully corresponds to the complexity of the subject. The draft clearly and unambiguously provides that no weapon of any kind whatsoever shall be put into outer space. The main question is not whether to work out one or several agreements. What we need is a comprehensive solution. The draft treaty submitted, which takes into account constructive considerations of other States, offers the Conference a good basis for negotiations, and in this negotiating process, it is up to everybody to propose amendments or supplements. To speak in clear terms: My delegation does not at all want to come to a situation similar to that which has been created by the opponents of a comprehensive test ban.

It only can serve a useful purpose to clearly spell out how things are going. Official statements of the United States Administration reveal its great efforts and the immense material means it is investing in the development, testing and production of different types of space weapons. In contrast, considerations of preventing an extension of the arms race to outer space and concluding international agreements are evidently for appearances' sake only. In substance those agreements and negotiations are rejected. Consequently, this Conference should invite the United States to reconsider its position and take into account what the great majority of States demand in the interests of international security and disarmament.

My delegation will address the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons in the further course of our session. Today, I would like to make only a few remarks on this issue.

The German Democratic Republic, like the other socialist countries, is striving for a speedy and radical solution in this field. I may recall resolution 38/187A, of the last General Assembly, which was initiated by my country. The proposal on the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Europe is also aimed at this objective.

In order to reach a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons, it is necessary to intensify the negotiations within the framework of this Conference. A number of proposals have improved the conditions in this respect. This applies, in particular, to the far-reaching Soviet initiative of 21 February 1984 concerning the elimination of stocks of chemical weapons. The working paper of China on major elements of a future convention and that of Yugoslavia on national verification measures contain valuable ideas. The mechanism of verification proposed by the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and France in different CD documents are the subject of thorough examination by us. This will also be our approach to the draft convention submitted today. In any case, the yardstick will be to what extent all the documents contribute to the speedy elaboration of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

However, it seems to us quite strange that one of the draft treaties was linked with a motion addressed to Congress for granting huge sume for a programme for the production of qualitatively new chemical weapons. It is well known how difficult it is to prohibit weapons once production of them has already started. Conducting negotiations in good faith means refraining from actions directed against the purpose of those negotiations.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (translated from French): The French delegation wishes to express its profound satisfaction at the presentation today of the United States draft treaty on chemical weapons announced in January in Stockholm by Mr. George Shultz. We particularly appreciate the fact that it was presented by the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. George Bush.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

This event certainly marks a very important stage in the negotiations undertaken here on chemical weapons. We are sure that this draft will provide a very constructive contribution to the negotiations.

France will do everything in its power to contribute to the success of the negotiations.

The chemical threat looms over the world. In Europe, it is an important aspect of security concerns.

Recent events have shown that chemical weapons were used in other parts of the world, and we know that the capacity to produce them is quite widespread.

Chemical disarmament is therefore not a matter for regional solutions but for a general solution: a multilateral treaty of universal scope.

The French Government has long advocated the conclusion of such a treaty which should include, in particular, a detailed time-table for the destruction of stocks and the dismantling of production facilities. A few days ago, the French delegation submitted a Working Paper on the subject. Needless to say, the treaty on chemical disarmament should include essential verification measures in order to create among States Parties the necessary degree of confidence in the respect for its provisions.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I see none.

I would like to repeat the announcement that the meeting of the contact group under item number 5 of the agenda will take place in Room C.108 immediately after the adjournment of this plenary meeting. 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 Tuesday, 24 April, at 10.30 a.m.

The plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.