

COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 4 August 1983, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. J. Morelli Pando (Peru)

GE.83-63536

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. L. MOUSSAOUI

Argentina: Mr. J. CARSALES
Mr. R. VILLAMBROSA

Australia: Mr. R. STEELE
Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium: Mr. A. ONKELYNX
Mr. J.M. NOIREFALISSE

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

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

Burma: U TIN KYAW HLAING
U THAN TUN

Canada: Mr. G.R. SKINNER

China: Ms. W. ZHIYUN

Cuba:

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. VEJVODA
Mr. J. JIRUSEK

Egypt: Mr. I. ALI HASSAN
Mr. A.M. ABBAS

Ethiopia: Mr. F. YOHANNES

France: Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. F. SAYATZ
Mr. M. SCHNEIDER

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. VON DEM HAGEN
Mr. M. GERDTS

Hungary:

Mr. I. KOMIVES
Mr. F. GAJDA

India:

Mr. S.K. SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. I. DAMANIK
Ms. P. RAMADHAN
Mr. M. JALALUDDIN
Mr. N. WISNOEMOERTI

Iran:

Mr. F.S. SIRHANI
Mr. N. KOZEMI KAMYAB

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. D. DI GIOVANNI

Japan:

Mr. R. IMAI
Mr. M. KONISHI

Kenya:

Mr. W. WABUGE

Mexico:

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

Mongolia:

Mr. S.-O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. M. CHRAIBI
Mr. O. HILAIE

Netherlands:

Mr. J. RAMAKER

Nigeria:

Mr. G.O. IJEWERE
Mr. I.E. AYEWAH
Mr. A.N.C. NWAZOMUDOH
Mr. L.O. AKINDLE

Pakistan:

Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru:

Mr. J. MORELLI PANDO
Mr. C. CASTILLO
Mr. V. ROJAS
Mr. A. THORNBERRY

Poland:

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

Romania:

Mr. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM

Sweden:

Mr. C.M. HYLTIENIUS
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Mr. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. V.F. FRIAKHIN
Mr. N. VASHADZE
Mr. B. PROKOFIEV
Mr. V.M. GANJA
Mr. T. DMITRITCHEV
Mr. G. BERDENNIKOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. L. MIDDLETON
Ms. J.E.F. WRIGHT

United States of America:

Mr. L.G. FIELDS
Mr. M.D. BUSBY
Mr. P.S. CORDEN
Mr. B. DURHAM
Mr. R. SCOTT

Venezuela:

Mr. O. GARCIA GARCIA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the
Committee on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 231st plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Committee will continue today its consideration of item 6 of its agenda, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". In conformity with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, members who so wish may make statements on any other subject relevant to the work of the Committee.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Federal Republic of Germany. I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Thielecke.

Mr. THIELICKE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, at its last meeting this Committee took note of the progress report of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts on its sixteenth session, which was introduced by its Chairman on 26 July. In this connection, I would like to make a few remarks on the work of the Group of Scientific Experts as well as on some broader aspects of a comprehensive test ban. My delegation welcomes the recent report of the Group of Scientific Experts and the significant progress which has been made towards achieving consensus on the forthcoming Third Report.

It is our understanding that this report will constitute the basis for a comprehensive experimental exercise of the envisaged global system for the exchange of Level 1 seismic data which would be conducted after the entry into force of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

Without any doubt, the Group of Scientific Experts has done useful work until now. The recommendations contained in its two reports (documents CCD/558 and CD/43) provide a clear idea on the international exchange of seismic data to be established in connection with a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. The relation between the work of the Group of Scientific Experts and negotiations on a treaty was clearly expressed in the present mandate of the Group adopted by the Committee on Disarmament on 7 August 1979.

However, the situation with regard to item 1 of our agenda has changed since then. Whereas the technical work on a comprehensive test ban is quite advanced, there are actually no negotiations on a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

We share the opinion contained in last year's report of the Ad hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban "that there was a close relationship between political negotiations on a nuclear test-ban treaty and technical work on a verification system and that the latter should not be carried out as if it were an open-ended exercise that could go on indefinitely so as to take account of every scientific and technological advance".

(Mr. Thielicke, German Democratic Republic)

A political decision to start negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty is urgently needed. Otherwise such technical work is bound to become l'art pour l'art.

There are documents on the table now which not only identify and define issues of a future treaty but provide sufficient material for treaty negotiations. The "Basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", submitted by the Soviet Union at the beginning of this year's session, covers the main elements of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. In June, Sweden tabled a "Draft treaty banning any nuclear weapon test explosion in any environment". With regard to such main issues as the scope of prohibition, a solution for the question of peaceful nuclear explosions and the procedure for the entry into force of the treaty, both documents envisage similar provisions. They have in common the basic approach to verification, i.e. they proceed from a combination of national and international means of verification. On the other hand, there are certain differences with regard to detailed verification questions which, in our view, could be overcome in negotiations.

We face a strange situation now in this Committee: whereas there are a lot of ideas on and even draft provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban is confined, under its mandate, to mere discussions. The Working Group is prevented from proceeding to actual negotiations by some countries which consider a comprehensive test ban only a long-term goal.

Until now these countries have not given a convincing answer as to what would be an adequate system for the verification of compliance with a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

To justify their negative attitude with respect to negotiations, they have put forward so-called unsolved technical problems which should be dealt with before the Committee proceeds to negotiations.

This approach is, inter alia, characterized by ignorance of the major progress made in the course of the last 20 years in the field of technology for monitoring seismic events. Moreover, the proponents of such an approach sometimes try to single out certain elements of a system for the verification of a comprehensive test ban and to discuss them in an abstract way and allege that their verification potential would not be sufficient. Thereby, the complex character and the capability of the whole conceivable verification system ranging from national technical means up to on-site inspections by challenge is ignored deliberately.

Some delegations deplore that up to now no concise assessment is available as to whether the international exchange of seismic data as recommended by the Group of Scientific Experts will work effectively. On 2 August the

(Mr. Thielicke, German Democratic Republic)

delegation of the United Kingdom pointed to the fact that the world-wide network contemplated for the verification of a comprehensive test-ban treaty is not yet in existence. Furthermore, it argued that the "capabilities of such a network are, therefore, not yet proven, and the estimate that we make of its capabilities is based on assumptions with respect to the distribution of stations which cannot at present be determined, since it will depend in part on adherence to the treaty". We share this assessment. However, we miss the conclusion which should logically be drawn from it. This conclusion can only be to agree on a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Only then will it become known which States will participate and make their seismic stations available for the international network. Only in this way can the vicious circle mentioned by the United Kingdom delegation be broken through.

It was argued that it would not be possible to agree now on a comprehensive test-ban because of methods for the evasion of such a ban. Those techniques were discussed in the predecessor of this Committee already more than 20 years ago. In the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban my delegation dwelt upon this question in detail. We drew attention to the fact that the practical potential of evasion methods is highly doubtful. Even those delegations which refer to them again today, confess that these methods are not very likely. However, at the same time, we were asked to study in-depth these and other technical questions before starting negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. So, we might legitimately ask: how long shall we consider such dubious problems before proceeding to negotiations?

After having discussed the different approaches to CTB verification, my delegation, in its statement of 31 August 1982 in this Committee, drew the following conclusion: "It is, of course, important to clarify and solve technical problems connected with verification of a CTB. However, at some point a political decision should be taken. Otherwise, there would be a danger of converting negotiations into technical deliberations, and their purpose — a CTBT — would be buried under a heap of technical papers" (CD/PV.183, p.32). This conclusion has not lost its topicality.

Verification of compliance with a comprehensive test-ban treaty is very important. However, it must not be misused as a smokescreen for the negative attitude of some countries towards a complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. Those countries leave no doubt about their real position relating to nuclear-weapon tests, which they deem necessary for the development of new systems of nuclear weapons that are part and parcel of programmes to achieve military superiority.

While the United Kingdom delegation at the end of the 1970s made rather encouraging statements in this Committee on the progress of the trilateral negotiations, it is providing us now with quite a gloomy picture on a comprehensive test ban, which it obviously does not regard as a priority item any more. In close connection with this, we may observe how agreements reached during the trilateral negotiations seem to be put aside step by step. This applies, for example, to the question of peaceful nuclear explosions.

(Mr. Thielicke, German Democratic Republic)

In the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban we had, on the basis of the programme of work, a structured discussion to define issues concerning verification and compliance. Now, all of us seem to have quite a clear understanding of the positions and approaches of different delegations. It has become even more obvious that the present mandate of the Working Group does not meet the actual requirements. It is necessary to pass to the next phase in the work of this Working Group, i.e. to elaborate a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Accordingly, the mandate of the Group should be enlarged. Such a procedure would be in keeping with the decisions taken by the Committee in 1982 and this year on the establishment of the Ad hoc Working Group. Such a view was shared at the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly by 124 countries which voted in favour of resolution 37/72. Only two countries — the United States and the United Kingdom — manifested their negative attitude by a corresponding vote.

On the occasion of the forthcoming twentieth anniversary of the Moscow Treaty on the partial prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, on 5 August, the German Democratic Republic, which was one of the first Treaty parties, would like to emphasize that it is necessary to implement the Treaty in all its provisions. This includes the obligation to continue negotiations on the prohibition of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. In spite of the resistance of some countries to a comprehensive test ban, we have to go ahead with our efforts to solve this problem and to contribute in this way to the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

Mr. HYLTEINIUS (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship for this month. Let me offer you on behalf of my delegation our complete co-operation, and express our pleasure at having the opportunity to work under your experienced guidance. Let me also, through you, Mr. Chairman, express our appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Ahmad of Pakistan, for the skilful and effective manner in which he discharged his responsibilities as chairman during the month of July.

Tomorrow it will be 20 years since the partial test-ban Treaty was signed in Moscow by the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. On that occasion those nuclear-weapon powers pledged to continue negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is with deep regret that we note that there is today no real negotiation on this issue, nor is there any prospect of a solution of this question in the near future. This has serious consequences for the prospects of halting the nuclear arms race and for the efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It also blocks efforts to reach agreement on a number of other disarmament issues, including the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

But in spite of this fact we must not fail to provide new impetus to a negotiation process which inevitably must get started if we are going to avoid a global nuclear disaster. It was in this spirit that the Swedish delegation submitted a draft treaty on a nuclear test ban at the beginning of the summer session.

The main obstacles to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty are no doubt political, but also some technical issues remain to be resolved. We should at least try to make progress on those issues awaiting a more favourable international situation. Today I would, therefore, like to revert to one feature of the Swedish draft treaty, namely, the proposal regarding the establishment of an international system for the surveillance of airborne radioactivity, which should be complementary to an international seismological monitoring network, and in so doing I shall also have the honour of introducing working paper CD/403, which has just been submitted by Sweden to the Committee today.

A little more than one year ago Sweden proposed, in document CD/257, that the discussions on the verification of a comprehensive test ban, which for a very long time have been focused on the surveillance of underground tests, should also cover the atmospheric test environment and its main verification method, i.e., the analysis of atmospheric radioactivity. It is quite natural that when the techniques for the detection and localization of underground nuclear explosions have become so advanced, the means of verification in other test media again emerge to the surface of the discussion. Back in the early 1960s, before the signing of the partial test-ban Treaty, extensive schemes of verification were elaborated for a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which seemed to be at hand at that time. Already then, the technical problems in designing an atmospheric control system seemed to have been overcome. However, as I just said, in the last 20 years, interest has been focused on elaborating other means of international verification. Now that we, from the technical point of view, are rather close to an effective seismological monitoring system, it is time to revive the idea of an international network for the surveillance of airborne radioactivity as a complementary system of verification of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Sweden, in its draft treaty submitted to the Committee on Disarmament on 14 June 1983 (document CD/381) in article IV included such a system as a means of verification.

I should now like to comment on working paper CD/403 on the international surveillance of airborne radioactivity, which is before you. This paper attempts to answer some of the comments made and the questions asked in connection with the proposal that an international system be established for the international surveillance of airborne radioactivity. My delegation is grateful to those delegations which have shown interest in our proposal, and it is our hope that we shall be able to answer at least some of the questions asked and meet the concerns which have been expressed on this issue.

It has been argued that the partial test-ban Treaty, which did not include any international measures of verification, has worked well for 20 years, and this is mainly true, but it must be noted that that Treaty is primarily a health measure and not much of an arms limitation treaty. It has, all through, been possible to continue nuclear weapons developments through underground tests.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

If and when a comprehensive test-ban treaty enters into force, the situation will shift significantly. The temptation to make clandestine tests of nuclear devices in the atmosphere is likely to increase drastically, if there is no effective monitoring of the atmosphere. The importance of this loophole in verification is well illustrated by the uncertainty about the event in the South Atlantic in September 1979. It was not possible to establish through international means whether that was a clandestine atmospheric nuclear explosion or not. As there are very few national sampling stations for atmospheric radioactivity in the southern hemisphere with the capacity to detect small amounts of shortlived debris, it was not possible to trace possible corroborative evidence of a nuclear explosion. With an international system for the surveillance of airborne radioactivity operating, the probability of getting that evidence would have been greatly increased.

It has also been said or implied that national systems are quite adequate and that there is nothing to gain from international co-operation in this field. Debris from even small nuclear tests in the Far East has been easily detected in a number of countries at mid-latitudes in the northern hemisphere. This is due to the general circulation of air by strong westerly winds at mid-latitudes. However, this is not the case all over the globe, and the probability of picking up debris from a test very much depends on the location of the test site and the sampling station. The collection of data simultaneously at several sampling stations in a global network, in addition to the time of the explosion, would in addition provide some information that would help to locate the test site. International co-operation would ensure a global coverage with as even as possible a detection capability for all possible test locales. It would also make certain that the surveillance operates continuously, and it would provide data for judgement by all parties to the Treaty without discrimination.

In the working paper now submitted to the Committee, there is a short description of how a possible system for the international surveillance of airborne radioactivity could be set up, and of the costs involved in establishing and operating it. The paper also contains a short summary of a study carried out by the meteorological authorities in Sweden dealing with methods to optimize, from a meteorological point of view, a global network of sampling stations in a system of international surveillance of atmospheric radioactivity.

As is evident from the working paper, such a system would technically be fairly easy to establish and to operate, and the costs involved would be modest. We fail to see why a verification system should not be improved as much as possible as long as this can be done at reasonable costs. By adding a system for the international surveillance of atmospheric radioactivity to a seismological monitoring network, the effectiveness of verification would be greatly enhanced. As this can be done at modest costs, my delegation is of the opinion that this possibility should be seriously considered.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Sweden for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, His Excellency Ambassador Issraelyan.

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all, on behalf of the delegation of the Soviet Union, to welcome you, the Ambassador of the friendly Latin American country of Peru, to the difficult and responsible office of Chairman of the Committee for the month of August. You will be directing the work of the Committee during its most delicate phase, that of the drafting and approval of the annual report of the Committee on Disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. I should like to assure you of the readiness of the delegation of the USSR to give you every assistance in the discharge of your duties.

Allow me also to express our gratitude to Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of Pakistan for his skilful guidance of the work of the Committee during the month of July, and for his tact, understanding and dexterity in solving the many problems which inevitably confront the Chairman of the Committee in the course of its work.

The delegation of the USSR would like to make some comments in connection with one of the highest priority items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament -- the question of a complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

One of the main reasons why the overwhelming majority of delegations in the Committee on Disarmament agreed to the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this question with a clearly limited mandate was their sincere desire to use every possibility now existing for the achievement of progress towards the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests. The question we have to answer now is whether the Committee, after two years' discussion of the problem, is any nearer to the attainment of the goal set before it by the international community, namely, the elaboration as soon as possible of a draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and its submission for consideration to the United Nations General Assembly.

An objective analysis of the present situation and of the documents submitted by a number of delegations, and in particular by the United Kingdom delegation, leads us to the conclusion that we are now further away from such an agreement than we were a few years ago when mutually acceptable agreements were reached, as set forth in the tripartite report to the Committee on Disarmament (document CD/130). It was precisely these agreements which the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban decided to take into account, amongst other things, in its work.

From the discussions which have taken place it is obvious that, evidently as the result of a political decision to put off indefinitely the conclusion of a treaty, the positions of two of the participants in the tripartite negotiations, at least in certain important respects, have undergone a change. In order not to make unsubstantiated statements, I shall give some examples.

Whereas these two powers earlier agreed to the drawing of a clear distinction between nuclear-weapon tests and nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and the provision of separate regimes for them under the treaty, they now insist that, as is stated in the United Kingdom working paper, document CD/385, "confidence in a comprehensive treaty could only be ensured if all nuclear explosions were banned". That is not in accordance with either the letter or the spirit of paragraph 10 of the tripartite report (CD/130) which states in particular that the treaty will be accompanied by a protocol on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, which will be an integral part of the treaty, that the parties will establish a moratorium on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and that without delay after the entry

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

into force of the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests the parties will keep under consideration the subject of arrangements for conducting nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, including the aspect of precluding military benefits.

We wish once more to emphasize that the Soviet Union -- and other countries, too, as has become clear in the course of the discussions -- has always attached and continues to attach greater importance to the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, and derives significant economic benefits from such use. Nevertheless, in the interests of the speediest possible conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the USSR agreed during the tripartite negotiations to the establishment of a moratorium on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. That important step by the Soviet Union was welcomed at the time both by the participants in the tripartite negotiations and by the world community as a whole.

Like many others, we consider that the question of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes is of secondary importance by comparison with the goal of a complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and can be settled in the context of negotiations after the conclusion of the treaty.

We believe that the position concerning nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes formulated in the Soviet document, "Basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests", offers a possibility for the solution of the question of the scope of the prohibition within the framework of a treaty on a mutually acceptable basis. It permits on the one hand the attainment of the principal goal, namely, the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, and on the other the working out, during the period of the moratorium, of procedures for the conduct of peaceful nuclear explosions. Thus there are no insurmountable obstacles in this connection, unless, of course, deliberate efforts are made to create such obstacles.

Another question on which the positions of the two nuclear-weapon powers have undergone a change is that of seismic verification. While earlier they agreed in principle that the system for the international exchange of seismic data would be sufficient for the purposes of an international treaty, they evidently now have a different opinion. Whereas earlier they agreed to include in the text of the treaty only the broad outlines of a system for the international exchange of seismic data, leaving the details of the system to be worked out by a committee of experts, they now insist that all the details should be worked out before the entry into force of the treaty.

Essentially, what the United Kingdom working paper (document CD/402) submitted at our plenary meeting on 2 August implies is that until all the technical problems of verification have been resolved, there can be no negotiations. This applies particularly to seismic verification. This would mean in practice that it would never be possible to devise a verification system that would be 100 per cent satisfactory to the States which consider this essential. All the more strange and incomprehensible, then, is the conclusion reached in the United Kingdom paper that "What is at issue is the political will to recognize that the correct path towards an agreed treaty -- however long it may prove to be -- leads through detailed consideration of the verification issues". This is an upside-down kind of logic. It shows, not a will to negotiate, but a will to block negotiations. It is obvious that no problems can be resolved by mere discussion, however detailed that may be. These problems can only be resolved at the negotiating table, not in a debating club.

(Mr. Israelyan, USSR)

Furthermore, as is clear from the tripartite report, the two nuclear-weapon States did not earlier see any need for a supplementary system for the detection of airborne radioactivity. Now they are arguing in favour of such a system for the verification of compliance with a prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

Lastly, whereas earlier these States agreed in principle to the carrying out of on-site inspections on a voluntary basis, they are now rushing to support a view put forward by certain delegations in the Ad Hoc Working Group which amounts in effect to the principle of verifications on a compulsory basis.

It is difficult to see how all this can be reconciled with what is stated in paragraph 19 of the tripartite report (CD/130), namely, that "the three negotiating parties believe that the verification measures being negotiated -- particularly the provisions regarding the international exchange of seismic data, the committee of experts and on-site inspections -- break significant new ground in international arms limitation efforts and will give all treaty parties the opportunity to participate in a substantial and constructive way in the process of verifying compliance with the treaty".

I have given these examples because they are extremely characteristic of the approach of these delegations to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban and, indeed, to the entire problem as a whole. The main purpose of this approach is to play down the agreements reached in the past and to emphasize the divergences of views that subsist, with respect to practically all aspects of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, instead of trying to achieve mutually acceptable agreements on these aspects. The ultimate objective of all this seems to us perfectly obvious -- to try to convince the States members of the Committee on Disarmament and the entire world community that it is not the lack of political will on their part that is the obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests but the difficulties of a technical and other nature that are, allegedly, objectively inherent in this problem.

The questions dealt with in the two documents submitted by the United Kingdom delegation, as everyone very well knows, are not problems which have only just arisen. They existed 20 years ago also. But as the history of the tripartite negotiations shows, they can be settled on a mutually acceptable basis if there is a sincere desire for and interest in the conclusion of a treaty. When that desire is missing, then we are presented with such documents, the sole object of which is to put us still further away from a possible agreement.

The position of the Soviet Union on the question of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, including the verification of such a prohibition, has been frequently and sufficiently clearly set forth at the most varied levels.

The Soviet Union belongs to the majority group of delegations which believe that the means of verification existing today, as, indeed, those which existed 10, 15 and even 20 years ago, are entirely adequate to provide an assurance of compliance with a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, and that what is required here is a political decision.

If we turn again to document CD/130, we can see that the participants in the tripartite negotiations worked out an extremely well-balanced system for the verification of compliance with the provisions of a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. The participants in the tripartite negotiations reached an agreement in principle not only on all the basic components of such a system but also on very many of its specific technical details. We do not

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

wish to minimize the divergences of views which nevertheless subsisted between the participants in the negotiations. The important thing, however, is that the international verification system established under the treaty should give the parties to it sufficient -- I repeat, sufficient -- assurance that the provisions of the treaty are being complied with by the parties, that such a system should deter the parties from engaging in any activity prohibited by the treaty and that it should, to the maximum degree possible, preclude unwarranted suspicions arising in connection with events of natural origin.

We believe that such a system is to be found in the Soviet document, "Basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" (CD/346) and that it is adequate for the purposes of the treaty.

We are firmly convinced that the only way to achieve progress towards the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests consists in endeavouring, in a constructive spirit, to widen the area of agreement reached over many years of laborious negotiations, instead of trying to undermine that agreement, changing positions, raising more and more problems and emphasizing and exaggerating differences of views. The metamorphosis which has taken place in the attitude of two of the participants in the tripartite negotiations on the question of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is truly profound. This phenomenon is, generally speaking, extremely dangerous in negotiations. I should like to ask a question: supposing we had somehow reached an agreement yesterday, what guarantee would there be that the parties to the agreement who behave in such a way would not repudiate it today?

In conclusion, the delegation of the USSR would like to make a few brief comments on the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts which has been submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

The Soviet delegation has no objections to the report and agrees that the Committee should take note of it.

The Soviet Union attaches great importance to the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts. The first and second reports of the Group of Experts, contained in documents CCD/558 of 1978 and CD/43 of 1979, provide a sound basis for the drafting of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

We should like to emphasize that the Group of Experts ought to continue its activity solely -- solely -- in the context of the negotiations on the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests. Otherwise, its activity will mislead world public opinion as to the true situation in the Committee on Disarmament on this issue.

The Group's final report, adopted on the basis of consensus, should constitute a useful contribution to the successful furtherance of the work of the Committee on Disarmament on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, His Excellency Ambassador Wegener.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): Mr. Chairman, allow me to add the congratulations of my delegation to those of the other members of the Committee who have expressed their pleasure at seeing you in the Chair. Your wide professional experience acquired in the highest diplomatic posts of your country befits us well in a month when particular momentum is needed to deal with unfinished business and to put a positive face on our troubled annual session. Through you I should also like to express gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Ahmad, who has set new standards of excellence for the chairmanship of the Committee.

Today I have pleasure in introducing a working paper, document CD/404, entitled "Modalities of the review of the membership of the Committee".

Our recent discussions on that topic in an informal framework have revealed that a number of differences of view and conceptual ambiguities still persist with regard to the plan to proceed to a limited expansion of the Committee's membership, a plan which, in principle, all delegations have endorsed.

The working paper purports to clarify some of these ambiguities and to enumerate the principles which should govern any process of enlargement of the Committee. Based on these principles, the working paper introduces the concept of a staggered enlargement over time as one possible model for the solution of the membership problem. It is the hope of my delegation that the working paper will contribute to the success of our further discussions on the subject and, ultimately, to the adoption of appropriate decisions which will, at the same time, enhance the work and functioning of the Committee and meet the concerns of many observer delegations which have worked with us diligently over many years but whose formal applications for membership have so far remained unanswered.

May I also take this opportunity to draw the attention of delegations to the text of a statement by Foreign Minister Genscher on the occasion of the anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of Helsinki. In his statement, which has been made available to colleagues on an informal basis, the Minister assesses the great importance of the impending decision of the Madrid meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to convene a European Disarmament Conference as a new and important forum for an arms control dialogue in all of Europe.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

I have no other speakers on my list for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? Apparently not.

The secretariat has circulated today, at my request, a time-table of meetings of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for next week. As usual, the time-table is purely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. Members of the Committee will note that the time-table includes an informal meeting to consider follow-up measures to the conclusions of the First Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof. This informal meeting will take place on 9 August. There is also the possibility of another informal meeting on 11 August. These meetings will be held in conformity with the decision adopted by the Committee at its 225th plenary meeting.

Mr. JAIPAL (Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General): Mr. Chairman, there is a slight omission in the time-table that has been circulated and I would like to draw attention to it.

For Tuesday, 9 August, in the afternoon, there will be a meeting in Room V at 3 p.m. of Group B of the radiological weapons Working Group. The second correction concerns the time-table for Thursday, 11 August 1983, in the afternoon. In Room V the Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons will in fact meet from 9.30 to 11.30 a.m. and not 10.30 a.m.

We shall be reissuing this paper with corrections.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): If there are no objections, I shall consider that the Committee is prepared to adopt the time-table with the corrections just mentioned. The representative of Canada has the floor.

Mr. SKINNER (Canada): A moment ago, you mentioned that the sea-bed Treaty Review Conference preparations would be held on 9 and 11 August. Of course, we have to await the outcome of the meeting on Tuesday, 9 August, on this subject to know whether or not there will be a meeting on the 11th. That said, however, is there any anticipation on the part of the secretariat as to how the second meeting will be held, where, and at what time? Should it be necessary to have a second meeting?

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I should be grateful if the secretariat could provide us with some information in response to the questions of the representative of Canada.

Mr. JAIPAL (Secretary of the Committee on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General): We were thinking of scheduling that meeting, if necessary -- we are not quite sure if it will be necessary -- on Thursday morning, after the plenary meeting.

Mr. de BEAUSSE (France) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, although we are at the end of this meeting and I am not going to make a formal statement, I should like, before embarking on the subject of these few remarks, to say how pleased my delegation is to see you guiding the work of our Committee during this, the most difficult month, and my delegation would also like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude to the representative of Pakistan for the very effective way in which he guided our work last month.

It is not the intention of my delegation to question the decision taken by the Committee concerning the consideration of the conclusions of the First Review Conference of the Parties to the sea-bed Treaty. I feel obliged, nevertheless, to state that my delegation very much regrets that the small amount of time we have available -- the time-table for the week is very crowded -- that these few meetings we shall have will be devoted in part to this subject. I do not, in fact, think it proper that the Committee should concern itself with a consideration of the conclusions of the First Review Conference of the Parties to the sea-bed Treaty, for that is a subject which is not on the Committee's agenda and does not fall within the terms of its mandate; furthermore, very many

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

members of the Committee are not even parties to that Treaty. I should like to repeat, Mr. Chairman, that I am not questioning the decision that has been taken, but I wanted formally to recall the position of my delegation in this connection.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of France for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. If there are no objections, I shall consider that the Committee adopts the time-table as it was amended.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): In this connection, I wish to inform the Committee that I received yesterday from the representative of Norway a communication indicating that he would like to take part in the informal meeting or meetings to be held on the subject of the sea-bed Treaty. That note has been circulated among members of the Committee. I presume that there is no objection to the participation of Norway in the informal meetings on the subject of the sea-bed Treaty.

I see no objections. I shall inform the representative of Norway accordingly. I shall communicate to members of the Committee any other request I may receive between today and next Tuesday concerning participation in those informal meetings.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee will be held on Tuesday, 9 August, at 10.30 a.m. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.