

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 17 August 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. El Ghali Benhima (Morocco)

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): The 527th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

First of all, I should like on behalf of the Conference to wish a very warm welcome to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Jaromir Johanes, who will be the first speaker today. His Excellency the Minister is an important political figure who is noted for his extensive diplomatic experience. He entered the diplomatic service in the 1950s and has represented his country as Ambassador in Canada and in the United States of America. After taking up a senior post in the Ministry, the Minister was appointed First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. I am sure the members of the Conference will listen to His Excellency the Minister's statement with special attention.

Today the Conference continues its consideration of the reports of its ad hoc subsidiary bodies, as well as the consideration and adoption of its annual report to the General Assembly of the United Nations. However, in conformity with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any representative who so wishes may raise any matter relevant to the work of the Conference.

As I announced at our last plenary meeting, I intend to put before the Conference for decision today the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, contained in document CD/946, and the recommendation contained in paragraph 12 of the report of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts concerning the dates of the Group's next session.

On the list of speakers for today I have the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Egypt and Peru. I now give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Jaromir Johanes.

Mr. JOHANES (Czechoslovakia) (translated from Russian): It is a pleasure for me to take this opportunity to address this prominent organ of the international community for disarmament negotiations. I wish you, Mr. President, much success in your work in this responsible office. At the same time, I should like to note the creditable work of the representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ambassador Komatina, and of the Conference's secretariat.

Czechoslovakia considers the Geneva Conference to be an important component of efforts for progress in the vitally important field of disarmament, a unique mechanism thanks to which agreements have been worked out contributing to arms reductions. We all surely agree that it is high time for the Conference to reaffirm its effectiveness. That, however, requires the achievement of concrete results, particularly in the field of chemical and nuclear disarmament, where this forum must make its significant opinion known.

The work of the Geneva Conference is of considerable relevance to the ongoing process of normalizing the international situation. It is closely linked with positive changes, especially in the relations between the USSR and the United States, and generally between East and West, as well as with the peace-oriented activities of the non-aligned countries. All this is a source of momentum for the disarmament negotiations, helping to strengthen the

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favourable tendencies in world development. Confidence and stability have increased. Progress has been achieved in efforts to settle a number of regional conflicts. The authority of the United Nations has grown along with the conviction that it is possible to solve international problems by means of multilateral instruments of co-operation. New approaches to disarmament are taking shape, though not without difficulty.

The transition from confrontation to dialogue and the lessening of tension have already made it possible to initiate the process of real disarmament which is a key to a safer world. The elimination of two classes of nuclear weapons - intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles - is proceeding successfully. The Soviet-American talks on 50 per cent reductions in strategic nuclear arms are continuing. Important activities such as the initiative of the New Delhi Six are leading to progress in disarmament. The Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons has taken place. Negotiations on conventional armed forces and on confidence-building measures have been launched and are proceeding successfully in Vienna. However, new, resolute steps must be taken on the path to disarmament, not only bilaterally but also multilaterally, where the Geneva Conference has an irreplaceable role to play.

The turn in world events cannot be separated from the ongoing developments in the socialist countries, particularly in the Soviet Union, the policy of perestroika, political and economic reforms and the development of socialism. We in Czechoslovakia are also moving in that direction, and are implementing a profound restructuring of all spheres of life in our society. The impulses springing from this policy in the socialist countries are also markedly reflected in efforts aimed at the democratization, demilitarization and humanization of international relations.

The negotiations in Geneva cannot manage without an enhancement of mutual confidence, respect for the principle that in the nuclear age the security of any State can be reliably safeguarded only through security for all, and that solutions to the complex problems of the present time can be found only through joint efforts. In all these respects the new political thinking must continue to be palpably felt. Universal human interests and values are becoming paramount. Realizing them requires that any problems in State-to-State relations must be tackled by exclusively peaceful means, with strict respect for the right of every nation to choose freely the path of its development.

We cannot overlook the fact that negative phenomena still persist in the modern world. The burden of the past is still reflected in the continued arms build-up, relapses into power politics and interference in the internal affairs of other States. Tendencies towards confrontation continue in some regions. The external debt of the developing countries remains oppressive. The ecological threat is becoming ever more acute. The solution of these problems in the spirit of the new thinking is in the interest of the whole international community. Everything must be done to make the positive trends in the world irreversible.

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It is to this end that the efforts of Czechoslovakia and the other Warsaw Treaty States are directed. At the Bucharest meeting of the supreme body of that organization, the Political Consultative Committee, last month, we took a stand on topical matters relating to disarmament and security-building in Europe and world-wide. We emphasized the need to take concrete measures both in the nuclear and chemical fields and also in the field of conventional weapons. The decisions adopted there are realistic and constructive. They open up new prospects for the attainment of mutually acceptable solutions in all respects.

In the Bucharest Declaration we emphasized that the threat of war can be eliminated only through joint efforts, together with all-round strengthening of the political rather than the military factors of security and stability. In this context, we also decided to enhance still further the political character of the Warsaw Treaty. We are convinced that the transformation of the two largest military-political groupings into politico-military alliances would make a substantial contribution towards building up confidence, stability and security.

Czechoslovakia and its allies support the continuation of the dialogue between the USSR and the United States on 50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive weapons. It is encouraging that in the assessment of both sides, as outlined in this forum a few days ago, the recent round of negotiations was conducted in a constructive and business-like atmosphere. It is our opinion that conclusion of an agreement thereon, along with strict compliance with the provisions of the ABM Treaty as signed in 1972, would have a favourable impact not only on further talks on urgent disarmament issues, but also on the overall international climate. That would be a follow-up to the truly historic Soviet-American INF Treaty, to whose implementation Czechoslovakia has been contributing its share.

As far as tactical nuclear weapons are concerned, we deem it necessary to open separate talks about them as soon as possible. The Soviet Union's intention, as announced by M.S. Gorbachev in Strasbourg, to make a unilateral cut in this weapon system if such talks are launched deserves a constructive response from the other side.

To Czechoslovakia, a country situated on the line of contact between the two largest military-political alliances, the lowering of the level of military confrontation and enhancement of confidence and security in Europe are matters of high priority. This is why we attach such great importance to the ongoing talks in Vienna. The business-like atmosphere prevailing at both negotiating forums there is creating prerequisites for progress. In May this year we and our allies put forward significant proposals; the NATO States responded at their summit meeting in Brussels with steps of their own. We believe that given sufficient political will the first agreements at the 23-party talks can be reached as early as 1990. However, despite an overall convergence of views in principle on many important issues, much work is still to be done. We must not allow any of the as yet unresolved problems to become a cause of a slow-down or even blockage in the negotiations.

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Furthermore, qualitatively new confidence-building and security-building measures should be adopted before the next CSCE meeting in Helsinki in 1992. The progress of the 35-party talks has strengthened our conviction that if use is made of the experience from Stockholm, the attainment of the jointly set goal will be feasible. However, it is necessary to surmount the principal difficulty in these negotiations and ensure the inclusion of all armed forces under the new measures. If certain classes of troops or armaments were to fall outside their scope, this could give rise to new disproportions which would be further deepened in the context of the overall process of conventional disarmament.

We have always been convinced that medium-sized and small countries, too, can meaningfully contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security. Our concrete contribution towards this objective is the proposal for the establishment of a zone of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations along the line of contact between Warsaw Treaty and NATO States, announced in February 1988 by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Milos Jakes. It is becoming increasingly evident that concrete steps in the military sphere between States along the line of contact could help greatly in furthering confidence, transparency and predictability in military activities. We intend to continue consultations on our proposal with interested countries and to submit to them concrete suggestions on how to further advance the process of building security and confidence in Europe.

I should also like to recall on this occasion that Czechoslovakia, like its allies in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, has taken unilateral disarmament steps. We are reducing the number of troops in combat units by 12,000 men, and withdrawing and gradually dismantling 850 tanks, 165 armoured carriers and 51 combat aircraft. We are transferring 20,000 troops to military construction organizations whose tasks are of a purely civilian nature. We are limiting the size of military exercises. In 1989-1990 we shall decrease our defence spending by 15 per cent. These measures constitute Czechoslovakia's concrete contribution to achieving greater confidence and security in Europe. These efforts would no doubt be enhanced if our Western partners took corresponding steps.

The growing confidence among States is creating further possibilities for the reduction of military confrontation and for disarmament. In this context, an important and indeed irreplaceable role can be played by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, as it brings together representatives of all continents and regional groups. The Conference has been entrusted with the task of drafting and negotiating multilateral instruments which will undoubtedly strengthen the legal basis of the disarmament process and its multilateral character. We would like the Conference to develop by stages into a forum that would enable all States to participate actively and effectively in solving the problems which have a bearing on their vital interests.

The proposals put forward by the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, which met in Prague in October 1987, were dictated by the objective and urgent need to increase the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament. We are pleased to note the

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growing interest of States in its work, one manifestation of which is the fact that proposals and views of Governments are now increasingly presented at its sessions by Foreign Ministers and other senior political officials. These positive trends are, in our opinion, useful for the future work of the Conference.

Yet the situation requires more than that. We propose that better use should be made of the potential of this forum, and especially its working bodies, and that the procedures relating to their establishment should be streamlined. Special sessions of the Conference at foreign minister level, which would give the deliberations the necessary political stimulus, could, in our view, substantially promote progress in tackling the most acute problems.

The Conference has once again accomplished useful work this year. However, we must say frankly that we had expected more, both as to the drafting of the text of the convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons and as to consideration of the complex of nuclear disarmament issues.

The issue of prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons is for us a matter of top priority. We do not deny that we placed substantial hopes in the implementation of the suggestions embodied in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, at which all the participants at a high political level affirmed their readiness to conclude a global convention which would ban these barbarous weapons of mass destruction once and for all and called for the expeditious resolution of the outstanding issues with the participation of all the States concerned. Although the work on the text of the draft convention has been intensified and a certain amount of progress has been made in the consideration of the technical and legal aspects, the differences of principle in approaches to certain crucial issues have still not been overcome at this year's session of the Conference in Geneva. Therefore, we are calling once again for political will and creative efforts to find mutually acceptable solutions. The results of the latest round of Soviet-American talks on chemical weapons are a good sign in this respect.

Czechoslovakia will continue to work actively for the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. The essence of our approach is set forth in the statement issued by the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on 5 January this year, in which we stressed our readiness to be one of the first signatories of the convention as soon as it is finalized; we are already undertaking steps to this end domestically.

At the end of January we successfully carried out a national experiment to verify non-production of chemical weapons in the civilian chemical industry. It demonstrated that under present conditions in our economy verification based on the already agreed measures is basically feasible. It does not disrupt the production process in any major way, and the safeguarding of commercial secrets may be incorporated into it. We informed the participants in the Conference on Disarmament of the results of the experiment as early as April last.

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We have also adopted legislation limiting exports of certain types of chemicals. I wish to emphasize here that this measure is not meant to discriminate against anybody and does not impede further co-operation in the peaceful development of the chemical industry. Its only aim is to prevent misuse for military purposes of chemical products destined for use in civilian industry. We expect that the future convention will settle the question of the non-proliferation of chemical weapons so that these partial measures will lose their significance.

I can inform you today that Czechoslovakia is taking the following steps towards the speedy prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. Firstly, within the framework of the multilateral exchange of information relating to the drafting of the convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons we are making public, in an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, all the principal relevant data on our chemical potential. I wish to reaffirm once again that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic neither possesses nor produces any chemical weapons, nor are there any such weapons on our territory. All the research and laboratory work being carried out is exclusively connected with protection against the effects of chemical weapons and is pursued for peaceful objectives.

Secondly, we are ready to receive a team of foreign inspectors within the framework of the international trial verification of non-production of chemical weapons in civilian chemical industry. The check will be carried out at a chemical plant at Mnisek near Liberec, where the national experiment has already taken place. We expect that the rules for the international phase of the experiment will be agreed upon very shortly.

Thirdly, Czechoslovakia will make available for use by the verification bodies to be established under the convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons a special laboratory designed for analysis of samples and testing of the toxic effects of new chemicals. The laboratory will be equipped to handle all highly toxic substances, including those falling in schedule I.

We hope that this contribution on our part, our openness and efforts to promote the speedy achievement of mutually acceptable compromises, will prompt similar steps on the part of other States. In this spirit, we intend to make our contribution to the success of the international conference which will take place in Canberra this coming September.

We remain convinced that partial, regional measures, too, can play an important role in the efforts aimed at limiting, banning and eliminating chemical weapons. That is why between 1985 and 1988 we and the German Democratic Republic put forward a series of constructive proposals for the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. If they meet with a positive response, we might conduct a practical test in that sensitive part of the world of certain measures proposed in the convention, including verification. From this point of view, we continue to consider our initiative as timely. The creation of such a zone would make a substantial contribution towards lowering the level of military confrontation in Europe.

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The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva currently has before it yet another momentous task - that of opening substantive deliberations on nuclear disarmament issues as soon as possible. All the States that possess nuclear weapons are represented here. We are seriously concerned at the fact that competent working bodies on the individual problems relating to nuclear disarmament have not yet been established. We share with a number of other States the view that the time has come for bilateral and multilateral talks on this subject to run in parallel and to complement one another.

First and foremost, a major step forward should be made in the talks on a general and complete nuclear weapon test ban. The progress achieved at the Soviet-American talks is undoubtedly creating good preconditions for the work of the Conference on Disarmament too. For our part, we will do everything in our power in support of this endeavour. We reaffirmed our position in the joint document adopted by the Socialist States in June 1987, containing the "basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests".

It would also be useful to discuss the structure of future machinery for verification of compliance with a ban on all nuclear weapon tests. In this respect, the work of the Group of Scientific Experts and the experience obtained through international experiments on seismic data exchange are useful. In this spirit we are in favour of the idea of expanding its mandate or establishing a special group of scientists to consider the application of other verification procedures, such as monitoring of radioactivity in the atmosphere, observation through satellites or various methods of on-site inspection.

If constructive results are to be achieved on the nuclear test ban issue and further progress made in devising a verification régime, it is necessary to establish an ad hoc committee within the Conference to deal with this subject. To this end, we put forward a compromise proposal on its mandate a year ago. We note with regret that although most delegations have taken a positive stand on it since its official presentation in August 1988, consensus has as yet not been achieved on this question. Czechoslovakia is ready to continue to take an active part in the consultations which are under way on this matter at our Conference.

In our view, one of the paths towards the early halting of nuclear tests lies in extending the scope of the 1963 Moscow Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in three environments to cover underground testing. We support the idea of convening a special conference to discuss this matter. The Geneva Conference, too, might be instrumental in bringing this initiative to fruition, as it is a suitable forum to consider the extension of the scope of the Treaty's verification procedures.

Czechoslovakia is also working actively for the negotiation of measures which would prevent the deployment of any kind of weapon in outer space. The Soviet proposal for the establishment of an inspectorate to monitor objects launched into space for the purpose of checking that they do not carry offensive weapons is important in our view. If this is done, we will be

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willing to allow checking of all the Czechoslovak technical devices launched into space under the Interkosmos programme. We are also ready to consider constructive proposals made by other States for confidence-building measures and for greater openness in activities performed in outer space, which might become a guarantee precluding extension of the arms race into outer space.

Now as before, we are ready to assist in dealing with the other items on the Conference's agenda and other pressing issues in the sphere of disarmament. We are convinced, for example, that the role of multilateral diplomacy in respect of disarmament could be greatly enhanced if radiological weapons were banned, security guarantees were provided to non-nuclear States and a comprehensive programme of disarmament was discussed. Moreover, progress in any part of the disarmament process would represent a meaningful contribution to environmental protection. In this respect, Czechoslovakia and the other Warsaw Treaty States have taken up a principled position which is set forth in the document entitled "Implications of the arms race for the environment and other aspects of ecological security" adopted at last year's session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

The age we are living in requires from all of us resolute and concrete action to preserve universal human values. Disarmament is becoming a sine qua non of the peaceful and fruitful development of all nations of the world and an essential prerequisite for coping successfully with the global problems which are ripe for solution. The resources released as a result of the disarmament process should be used primarily for social and economic development. In this respect, we already face the crucial task of the practical conversion of a part of military production to the civilian sphere. The Conference on Disarmament, and especially the United Nations, might in future give considerable assistance in this direction.

Let me conclude by expressing my conviction that, given sufficient political resolve at this turning-point in the development of human society, we shall succeed, by joining forces, in reaching concrete agreements. We hope that the new political thinking, realism and far-sightedness will fully prevail and that the cause of disarmament will advance in every respect. I wish all of you much energy, persistence and success. I can assure you that we are ready to foster actively and constructively this peace-promoting endeavour which will benefit both the present generations and posterity.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Elaraby.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): It gives me great pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over this august body; not only because of the fraternal ties which bind - and if you will allow me to say so, very closely bind - our two countries together, but even more so because of your widely recognized personal qualities. Your wide diplomatic experience reassures us that you will be able to sail our boat safely ashore in this very crucial month of August, during which all the work of the past months boils down to conclusions.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

I wish also to recognize the significant contribution of Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia, who discharged with great distinction his responsibilities as President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July. May I also express my delegation's appreciation and gratitude to Ambassador García Robles for his continued support and boundless enthusiasm for the cause of disarmament, and for the excellent manner in which he conducted our work during his presidency? I wish him a speedy recovery.

Since I spoke last before the CD four ambassadors have left us. My delegation acknowledges the valuable contribution to our work by Ambassador Yuri Nazarkin of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Mario Cámpora of Argentina, Ambassador Mario Pugliese of Italy, Ambassador Nihal Rodrigo of Sri Lanka and Ambassador van Schaik of the Netherlands, who will be leaving us soon. We wish them all success in their new assignments. In this context Egypt takes particular pleasure in welcoming Mr. Batsanov of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Ogada of Kenya and Ambassador Rasaputram of Sri Lanka.

Before I embark on today's subject, I wish to pay tribute to the distinguished Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia for the very valuable statement he has just made to us.

High on the list of priorities of the Conference on Disarmament is the item dealing with chemical weapons. I shall focus most of my remarks today on this item. At the outset, I wish to pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Pierre Morel, and also to thank the members of his delegation as well as Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail and his assistants, for their very meticulous work. I wish also to thank the five chairmen of the working groups entrusted with the preparation of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The first session of the Conference on Disarmament to follow the Paris Conference is almost coming to an end. In Paris, 149 States, including all members of the Conference on Disarmament, solemnly called on the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva "to redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date". However, a breakthrough towards a comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons seems at present to be still beyond our reach.

Though Egypt recognizes that a considerable degree of progress has been achieved, we do however realize that we still have a long way ahead. Many of the remaining differences, as my delegation has stated on more than one occasion, are not confined to mere drafting refinements.

Today, I wish to put before this body my delegation's reading of the balance-sheet of this session. The first issue I will address pertains to the relation of the chemical weapons convention to other relevant international agreements. Our understanding, which has already been stated in the CD, is that in accordance with the general rules of international law, the chemical weapons convention, from the moment of its entry into force, should prevail over any existing international agreement covering the same subject-matter. In the view of my delegation, our work would be undone if unilaterally declared "rights" under the 1925 Geneva Protocol were to be transferred and

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thereby, somehow, eternalized in a comprehensive chemical weapons convention. Such attempts should be resisted in order to establish one universally applicable convention with enhanced effectiveness.

It is clear to my delegation from the divergence of positions on this question that the problem is not of a legal character, it is political. Given the nature of the prevailing positions an acceptable compromise has not yet materialized. It seems appropriate to propose that concerned delegations should consult further on this matter.

With respect to reservations, it is the view of my delegation that there should be no reservations attached to the chemical weapons convention. If however, such a view is not accepted, my delegation believes that reservations should be confined to certain provisions only, and that they should be compatible with, not derogate from, the scope and purposes of the convention.

This year the Ad hoc Committee undertook work on another issue of importance, that of "sanctions", through its Working Group on Legal and Political Questions. The discussion of this question has clearly demonstrated the highly delicate political nature of the problem, which needs to be further addressed in order to clarify additionally the issues involved and try to find appropriate solutions to them. Egypt, for its part, would like to see provisions containing specific measures to be applied should any State (party or non-party) violate the provisions of the convention. We would also like to have guarantees to ensure that sanctions are applied effectively and without discrimination or delay. Sanctions should not in our view be construed only as a device for punishment. We believe the reference to sanctions encompasses a more comprehensive approach that could provide requisite elements of security for States.

On the question of security a clear distinction should be drawn between nuclear and chemical weapons. The nature and consequences of the use of chemical weapons are more limited in scope, and the international community should not, in our view, limit itself to negative assurances in the manner followed with respect to the NPT when Security Council resolution 255 was adopted in 1968. The chemical weapons convention should aim much higher. Positive and credible assurances should be the ultimate objective.

Another crucial part of the convention which has not been dealt with this year is the question of "jurisdiction and control". This topic is at an early stage of consideration, and we are of the view that this issue should be the subject of relevant provisions in the convention.

Another area which Egypt is following closely is the negotiations on organizational aspects. The Executive Council, which will be the principal political organ of the international organization, is of great importance. I wish once again to thank the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee for his efforts to conduct consultations on this very important subject.

The Executive Council remains for most members of this Conference one of the most important issues. We believe that its size should be determined on the basis of the limits of the functional requirements, that is to say the rapidity of convening meetings and the ability to undertake timely

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decision-making. As for voting in the Executive Council, we favour the application of the rule of unanimity when it comes to substantive matters. However, we realize that unanimity may not always emerge. Consequently, we should provide for some other rule to avoid paralysis in the Executive Council. This point should be further considered. We are currently studying with great care the various ideas and proposals on the composition of this body. However, I wish to put forward some of my delegation's reflections on this question. My delegation is of the view that all States parties to the convention are entitled to serve on the Executive Council. We also consider that the fundamental criterion should be that of equitable geographical distribution. Furthermore, we do not subscribe to any approach which calls for the creation of permanent seats on the Council.

Another issue which attracts special attention is that of "verification". We do share the view expressed by many delegations that we need a credible, verifiable convention without any loopholes. It is therefore imperative that the convention should include effective verification provisions. Yet such requirements should not be abused. It should never be distorted and stretched to threaten the national security of States parties. We are inclined to consider the non-abuse of this device as being as important as the concept of verification itself. We therefore support the inclusion of detailed provisions on the procedure for verification, in particular with respect to the provisions on challenge inspection.

We have been following very closely the work on confidentiality and on the guidelines for inspections, and in our view, a degree of progress has been achieved in this regard.

Turning to another issue, I would like to refer to the question of the Canberra Conference. The Government of Australia has been in contact with my Government, and I would like to express our satisfaction at the results of these contacts. The conference, in our view, should be intended neither to create a parallel mechanism to what we have here in Geneva, nor to address the question of the so-called non-proliferation of chemical weapons or any interim measures to that end. This is what it should not do. We expect and hope the conference will endorse the objective of a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, and enhance the development of chemical industry and international co-operation for peaceful purposes in this field. I take this opportunity to reiterate that Egypt considers that the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons is the objective we all should strive to attain. Any attempt at reaching interim measures on non-proliferation of chemical weapons should not be accepted. The prohibition has, in our view, now become a basic norm of international law, and therefore should be scrupulously observed.

I turn now to another issue which enjoys high priority for a great number of delegations to this Conference: the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. You will recall that following the Paris Conference, and by reason of the high political will expressed in its Final Declaration, when the participating States "solemnly [affirmed] their commitments not to use chemical weapons", there was an attempt to amend the mandate so as to refer to the prohibition of use. This amendment did not acquire consensus acceptance.

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The reasons why do not appear anywhere on the records. I must say that my delegation has difficulty in understanding this situation. Therefore, my delegation is raising this question once again for consideration. We hope that you could bring the loose ends together before concluding the 1989 session. It is our genuine hope that the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons will recommence its work in 1990 under a new mandate which would reflect the latest state of will and preparedness.

Now that we are approaching the very last days of the current session, and since the present state of affairs does not present an easy setting, we must make the best of the inter-sessional period to try to catch up with what we missed during the 1989 session of the Conference.

In 1990 Geneva will once more host an international conference to review the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In September of this year the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the fourth NPT review conference will commence its work. The 1990 review conference is, as we all know, of paramount importance. Next year we must decide on whether 1995 will see only an extension or a review conference as well. In six years from now we must also decide on the validity of the NPT beyond 1995 and whether the NPT is to be amended. At present, the NPT has attracted a record number of adherents for any disarmament treaty: 139 States have acceded to this important legal instrument. Egypt considers that the NPT régime, as it stands today, contains considerable advantages. The NPT also has some serious shortcomings which need to be addressed and rectified. Some of these shortcomings were addressed by my delegation in New York during the first session of the Preparatory Committee last May. Briefly, the NPT in the view of this delegation remains discriminatory in character and lacks universality. The nuclear-weapon States, which have been entrusted with special responsibilities for the preservation of international peace and security, have not fully honoured their commitments enshrined in article VI of the NPT. Notwithstanding the important contribution made by the INF Treaty, it remains modest especially if measured against a continuum of time that dates back to 5 March 1970, the date of entry into force of the NPT. More is needed.

One additional issue which will pose a serious threat, as it did in past review conferences, is the issue of concluding a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Until today nuclear testing has continued unabated. The Palme Commission report, published in April 1989 and entitled A World at Peace, demonstrates that in 1988 alone a total of 40 nuclear tests were conducted by four countries - the USSR, the United States, France and China. This has only one meaning, namely that testing is crucial for the policy of nuclear deterrence and the continuation of an advanced nuclear arms race. While nuclear weapon testing contradicts the objective of the NPT, in our view, it is safe to argue that a CTBT will undoubtedly strengthen the non-proliferation régime.

Another additional subject which the NPT failed to deal with is the issue of security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the danger of nuclear weapons. This is a subject that the CD deals with, but regrettably without making any progress to date. As my delegation has stated on more than

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one occasion, Security Council resolution 255 of 19 June 1968, which was adopted a few days before the NPT was opened for signature, has built-in limitations. Unilateral declarations were made by only three nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, yet they remain, in the view of my delegation, qualified, conditional and limited. This, again, is another area of serious concern to a large group of States and an area where collective efforts are needed to create a more stable, credible and durable non-proliferation régime.

My delegation will present and elaborate on these issues during the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the fourth review conference.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Mr. Calderón.

Mr. CALDERON (Peru) (translated from Spanish): First of all, I should like to welcome His Excellency the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Jaromir Johanes, whose statement we heard with a great deal of interest and understanding.

I have requested the floor this morning to make a statement on the Canberra Conference on behalf of the Group of 21. I shall read this statement in English because that is the language in which we have worked on the text.

(Continued in English)

"The Group of 21 firmly supports and actively participates in the negotiations under way in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to conclude at the earliest date a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The Group of 21 strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons and reaffirms its commitment to an early comprehensive ban as the only effective and non-discriminatory solution to the threat posed by chemical weapons. That threat, aggravated by recent developments, cannot be removed by non-proliferation measures but only by the total elimination of chemical weapons.

"The Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons scheduled to take place in Canberra on 18-22 September 1989 must not seek to establish any alternative or parallel approach to the chemical weapons negotiations in the CD. Apprehensions of the Group of 21 about the relevance, objectives and structure of the Canberra Conference need to be clearly understood and addressed so that its outcome does not run counter to the current negotiations in Geneva.

"The Group of 21 is firmly opposed to any restrictive measures which may hamper the development of chemical industry, the transfer of technology and international co-operation for peaceful purposes in this field.

(Mr. Calderón, Peru)

"The Group of 21 expects the Canberra Conference to unambiguously endorse the objective of an early comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons and lend its support to the ongoing negotiations to that effect within the Conference on Disarmament."

(Continued in Spanish)

I have requested the Secretary-General, Ambassador Komatina, to distribute this text as an official document of the Conference.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Peru for his statement. I believe the representative of Australia wishes to speak. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. REESE (Australia): I seek the floor today to respond briefly to the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 21 by the distinguished representative of Peru. On behalf of my Government I would like to assure members of the Group of 21 that the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons to be held in Canberra from 18 to 22 September will support the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a chemical weapons convention, and the conference in Canberra will do this by focusing on measures to conclude and implement the convention.

The structure of the conference in Canberra is designed to encourage discussion in support of the chemical weapons convention - and not for any other purpose, as indeed the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Evans, said in his address to this Conference on 13 June last.

The Australian Government has consulted extensively with a wide range of countries in determining the final shape of the conference. The conference format now reflects those discussions.

Australia believes that the chemical weapons convention will be a better convention and will operate more effectively as a result of the contribution which industry can make to the convention. We are conscious that the role of industry is and must remain one of providing advice to governments, which obviously retain the responsibility for concluding international agreements.

Australia looks forward to the constructive participation in its conference of the many countries which have accepted our invitation to attend.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Reese for his statement. I have no other speakers on my list. Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor? It would seem not.

I would now like to move to other matters. I suggest we take up for adoption the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, contained in document CD/946. If there are no objections, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the report.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I now put before the Conference for decision the recommendation contained in paragraph 12 of the progress report of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, which appears in document CD/944, regarding the dates of the next session of the Group, which is to be held from 19 to 30 March 1990 in Geneva. If there are no objections, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the recommendation.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I would like to inform the Conference that today the secretariat has distributed document CD/WP.374, in English, concerning substantive paragraphs on item 1 of the Conference's agenda. The text of this document in the other official languages will be available today or tomorrow in the delegations' pigeon-holes.

I must also inform you that the informal consultations on the report of the Ad hoc Committee under item 5 of the agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", have not yet led to agreement. Consequently, the meeting of the Ad hoc Committee scheduled for this afternoon has been cancelled. The timetable of meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies for the coming week provides for a further meeting of the Ad hoc Committee. I hope that the informal consultations now under way will bear fruit and that the report of the Ad hoc Committee will be adopted without delay.

I would also like to inform you that the open-ended informal consultations on the substantive paragraphs on agenda items 2, 3 and 7 will begin today, immediately following this plenary meeting, in room I.

I have asked the secretariat to circulate today the timetable of meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies for the coming week. Since we are approaching the conclusion of our work, the timetable is purely indicative. I would like to emphasize that the timetable provides for informal consultations on Monday, 21 August on the substantive paragraphs on agenda item 1. I hope that the consultations on the other agenda items will have been completed to enable us to begin consideration of item 1. At all events, it is understood that the consultations on this item will follow the conclusion of the first reading of the substantive paragraphs on agenda items 2, 3 and 7. A meeting of the Ad hoc Committee on item 5 is also scheduled for Wednesday, 23 August at 3 p.m. I hope that on that day the Ad hoc Committee will adopt its report to the plenary.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I have no other business on the agenda for this meeting, which I therefore intend to close. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 22 August at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.