

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 22 March 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Emeka Ayo Azikiwe (Nigeria)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 545th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference continues today its consideration of agenda item 4, "Chemical weapons". However, in conformity with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Sri Lanka and Pakistan. I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Rasaputram.

Mr. RASAPUTRAM (Sri Lanka): This is my first formal statement to this Conference. I would at the very beginning join the others in extending to you, Mr. President, my congratulations on the excellent productive work that has already been accomplished under your able guidance. It gives us confidence to forge ahead with hope and determination for the realization of our aims and objectives in the field of disarmament. The Sri Lanka delegation will always extend to you its fullest support and active co-operation. May I also thank the distinguished Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands for the efficient and skilful manner in which he speeded up and steered the work in the burdensome month of February?

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank sincerely all my colleagues who have extended a warm and inspiring welcome to me in this Conference. It is inspiring, because those sentiments signify the collective nature of the endeavour entrusted to us by the peoples and nations we represent, irrespective of whether our respective constituencies are large or small, strong or weak. That endeavour is to codify State practice that can ensure international peace and security through disarmament in a world of dynamic change in which the security of nations can be divisible only notionally. As my predecessor has stated here in this Conference, Sri Lanka has indeed felt it a special honour to represent not merely ourselves but, in a sense, also the vast majority of non-aligned States whose security is based not on weapons, but on the strength of the rule of law applicable in inter-State relations.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome all those who arrived after me in this Conference. They are Ambassador Thomas Ariba Ogada of Kenya, Ambassador José Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Ambassador Hou Zhitong of China, Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki of Japan, Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela, Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States and Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico.

Recent statements heard in this hall and outside have acknowledged the momentous nature of changes taking place in the European region. The depth of analysis and comments made here by a number of speakers who preceded me indicate the broad range of possibilities in consolidating the work in this forum in safeguarding global security. As a small non-aligned country which relies on multilateral co-operation for the well-being and security of the

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system of nation States that we have today, we feel gratified that this single multilateral disarmament negotiating body is thus responding collectively to these changes.

Political changes that are taking place in Europe have been widely welcomed as being positive and creative. They have been characterized as laying foundations for the democratization of relations within and among States and for building new security structures based not on confrontation but on co-operation and understanding. We hope that these trends emerging in the traditional battlefields of Europe will provide a basis for a global reappraisal of security doctrines. As a non-aligned country which has advocated concordance and co-operation for global well-being and common security based on mutual assurances and sovereign equality rather than superior strength and implicit threats, we welcome these developments. As a democratic country which has practised universal adult franchise without interruption for over half a century, we welcome the process of democratization and what it promises in terms of global security and stability.

The peace-making and peace-keeping potential of the United Nations has been revitalized by the successes scored in finding peaceful solutions to a number of issues, including those relating to Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq war and Namibia. The biggest multilateral forum is indispensable to meet the accelerating needs of economic and political security. The regional conflicts that have been so managed or resolved have again demonstrated that multilateralism can work when it is enabled to do so. The developing countries which have yet to recover from a lost decade of development, with all that it implies for their security, expect the multilateral process to be strengthened.

We also derive satisfaction from the fact that the two major Powers and their alliances have now recognized the need for genuine nuclear disarmament. The INF agreement and the 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear arms expected sooner rather than later are a demonstration of the political feasibility of a less weaponized state of security. The non-aligned countries have long held that the security of our diverse but interdependent world can best be ensured by shedding weapons and not by adding them. If the increasing number of soldiers and military hardware were the symptoms of a deep-rooted political malady as conceived by the cold war protagonists, we must, if belatedly, address ourselves to non-military dimensions of security at a time when both the symptoms and the malady are waning away. Given the interdependent and multifaceted nature of security and threat perceptions, it is axiomatic that those issues should be addressed multilaterally. This Conference, being the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, has an indispensable role to play in globalizing new security structures. Without that, any emerging security prescription will lack global validity, since no single part of the world can be assigned exclusivity in conditions of security. We are perhaps far away from a de-weaponized state of security, although general and complete disarmament under international control remains on the international agenda. But if we fail to globalize a less weaponized state of security, there will be the danger of variant forms of old power structures transforming themselves into multi-polar power arrangements manifest in

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different regions of the world. The attendant instability and accumulation of weapons in various regions would thus aggravate regional tensions which are already propelled by their own regional and internal dynamics. Such phenomena may be less discernible than what was a highly visible adversarial relationship between the two alliance systems during the cold war period. But they entail instability and insecurity for the large majority of smaller countries which do not rely on military power for their own security.

In a world poised for global integration on an unprecedented scale, the answer to this potential danger is not to be complacent in the belief that the managed and reduced nuclear terror will give us enduring peace but to harness the full potential of the multilateral framework to globalize a progressively less weaponized security structure. The non-aligned countries at their summit last year in Belgrade reaffirmed this imperative:

"The non-aligned countries do not pretend, nor are they in a position, to change the world by themselves; but neither can the world be reshaped without them. The non-aligned favour concordance rather than confrontation, regardless of whether common problems of mankind or issues of regional interests are involved."

If this multilateral forum is to be a conduit for global rethinking on new and more democratized security structures, the question arises as to how it should respond to this challenge. The distinguished Ambassador of Brazil focused on some of the issues relevant to this task and a few others have also done likewise. We are encouraged by the very fact that the Conference has already initiated a process of thinking with an open mind. Fundamental to this thinking process are questions which touch upon the attitudes towards the competence of this body and the agenda of the Conference itself. We believe that the Conference has not been debilitated by any structural deficiencies and it has done and will do what its member States enable it to do, no more and no less. The changes that have taken place have brought into sharper focus the need for the Conference to address its agenda more purposefully and seriously if the international community is to derive the benefits of new developments on a global scale. As regards the agenda, while we should be open to new ideas, we should not be hasty in jettisoning what we have, simply because the Conference has not been enabled to do meaningful work for reasons other than procedural and structural. New ideas we welcome. My own delegation and a number of others have in the past focused on the question as to how we should address conventional disarmament questions, whether they are regional or global. The distinguished Ambassador of Sweden referred to the very pertinent issue of naval arms control and related matters. The prohibition of fissionable material production is another question referred to. My delegation therefore believes that the "in-house" mechanism for a process of thinking and reappraisal referred to by the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil is most timely. We expect this exercise to enhance and not diminish the CD's role in responding to new developments.

Multilateral treatment of the cluster of nuclear issues on the CD's agenda deserves attention more than ever. The elimination of a whole class of nuclear weapons by the INF Treaty and good prospects for deep reductions in strategic

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nuclear weapons are welcome developments. It is however a small mercy for the man in the street to know that tons of TNT stacked against him have been halved. Whilst we do not underestimate the complexity involved in pursuing the process of nuclear disarmament, it would indeed be against the spirit of positive developments which we witness today if multilateral participation in the nuclear disarmament process is denied. If concerns relating to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to other so-called destabilizing technologies are real, then surely answers will have to be found in addressing nuclear questions in a multilateral context. History has proved that the fragmentation of security concerns which are common to all countries and seeking unilateral control measures to address those concerns has been unsuccessful. It is counter-productive to deny the self-evident truth that nuclear issues are of concern to all countries. It is therefore indispensable that this forum should address these questions with a view to developing broad principles and a framework for the stages of the global nuclear disarmament process.

The question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban has now become more topical and urgent. This is not only because persistent international endeavours for nearly three decades have failed to bring about a halt to nuclear testing but also because of recent developments and forthcoming events related to a CTBT. A comprehensive nuclear test ban remains one of the most decisive steps against the emergence of nuclear weapons and more nuclear-weapon States. If the risk of nuclear proliferation is real, the opportunity to erect an effective barrier against such an undesirable development through a CTBT is also real. The commitments enshrined in the letter and spirit of the partial test-ban Treaty and the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty to seek the discontinuance of all test explosions for all time reflect this reality. The large majority of parties to these two instruments are puzzled and frustrated that persistent international calls to conclude a CTBT have remained unheeded. If the major nuclear Powers now recognize that they have built up excessive nuclear arsenals and that security could be achieved at lower levels of those armaments the need for continued testing seems unclear. The argument that continued testing will be needed to ensure the safety and reliability of a reduced nuclear stockpile seems to ignore the fact that reliability and safety requirements could be met without resorting to nuclear test explosions. These contradictions give rise to suspicions among those who perceive a need to produce nuclear weapons that vertical proliferation will continue. This is a blow to the international norm established and nurtured by the non-nuclear parties to the NPT. The difficulties of verifying a CTBT can no longer be invoked as a stumbling-block to the conclusion of a test ban. The United States-Soviet bilateral talks on nuclear test limitations provide increasing confidence and prove that given the political will verification problems can be effectively negotiated. As a matter of fact, the United States and the USSR are reported to have made good progress in finalizing necessary verification measures for the threshold test-ban Treaty. The commonly held technical opinion is that technical difficulties in verifying a complete test ban will be much less burdensome than those associated with threshold verification now being finalized.

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Tangible progress in commencing negotiations towards a comprehensive test ban is clearly a step that will be commensurate with the positive developments that we see in the field of nuclear disarmament. Although a few countries hold a different opinion about a time frame for concluding a nuclear test ban, it is considered as a desirable objective by all. Even if we were to address verification issues, this has to be done in the context of a possible structure of a treaty. Initiating a process towards negotiations on that basis will not prejudice anything, as we all know that such negotiations cannot be concluded within a short period. Given the various dimensions of a CTBT it is undeniable that such a measure should be negotiated multilaterally. We eagerly await the outcome of Ambassador Donowaki's untiring efforts in this regard.

The overwhelming majority of parties to the partial test-ban Treaty have made use of the due legal process provided for in the Treaty to convert that instrument into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We are gratified at the constructive dialogue that has taken place in this context among the parties, including the depositary Governments. Sri Lanka, being one of the initiators of the proposal, looks forward to a constructive amendment conference which could provide the necessary political impetus to find a way forward for the realization of the purposes enshrined in the partial test-ban Treaty.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another priority item on the CD's agenda. We believe that this is another area of multilateral endeavour which could benefit from the existing "psychosphere" that is promising and conducive. My delegation hopes to revert to this item in more detail at a later stage. We are pleased that the Ad hoc Committee on this subject has been established under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Shannon of Canada. However we had expected improvements to its mandate commensurate with constructive work that is possible. Outer space issues, particularly preventive measures against arms competition in that environment, have assumed greater importance as the use of outer space has become a truly multinational endeavour. Given the investments that continue to be made by an increasing number of countries in the use of outer space and its economic and security implications for all countries of the world, the need to keep outer space for the benefit of mankind remains a matter of urgency. Over three years, the Ad hoc Committee has accumulated a substantial amount of political, legal and technical expertise on the subject. We should now guide its work towards more focused consideration of common elements which could be further developed in terms of the Ad hoc Committee's mandate. Regrettably however the Committee has had a tendency to engage in cyclical debates in which a replay of positions has overwhelmed possible efforts to identify common ground. For too long, the Committee has debated merits and demerits of different segments of its work programme of past years. This we think is unnecessary and unproductive. This is all the more regrettable since it would have been possible for the Ad hoc Committee to focus on elements of common interest without prejudice to the position of any delegation with regard to an eventual agreement or agreements that could be reached. My delegation has long supported the formation of an expert group to help move this process of delineation forward. Irrespective of the form this expert contribution may

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take, we look forward to the new ideas of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on this subject so that identification of common elements can be done in a way acceptable to all delegations.

There is a widely shared optimism that a convention banning chemical weapons is within reach. The energetic and imaginative leadership of Ambassador Morel last year made noteworthy contributions to pave the way towards that goal. We are confident that under the able and dynamic leadership of Ambassador Hyltenius, the Ad hoc Committee will take decisive steps towards completing this task.

My delegation shares the view that most of the technical infrastructure of the convention is in place. Very useful work done last year on the annex on chemicals, the protocol on inspection procedures and the thorough and practical work on instrumentation has greatly contributed to this accomplishment. We are particularly pleased with the work on instrumentation ably chaired by the Finnish delegation. The outcome of this work indicated that the complex verification requirements of the convention could be expected to be met by the technological means available. We appreciate the initiative taken by Australia in bringing together private sector chemical industry and government representatives. It seems to us however that if we are to maintain the momentum generated by the Paris and Canberra conferences we have to take decisive steps towards completing the task without dampening the enthusiasm that has been aroused. The time has now come to address remaining issues in a political perspective with a view to arriving at speedy and lasting decisions through compromise, consultation and consensus. Ambassador Morel's cogent observations at the end of the Ad hoc Committee's session last year are still valid: "Our time is not infinite, and ... the convention now being finalized will produce practical results only if it is universal in its application." Technical competence alone will not facilitate the early conclusion of the convention.

We are inclined to believe that a time frame for the conclusion of the convention could now be considered as a via media for seeking solutions to remaining issues. The questions relating to scope, the composition and decision-making of the Executive Council, challenge inspection, assistance, the order of destruction, economic and technological development and the convention's relationship to the 1925 Geneva Protocol are issues which require political decisions in a spirit of compromise, bearing in mind the realities of desired universality. One could argue that these issues are politically interrelated in a manner that perhaps requires solutions in a package form during the terminal phase of negotiations. We therefore believe that a sense of timing should be infused into our negotiations in order to provide a proper framework for compromises. These efforts can take place parallel to the technical work that still has to be done in the working groups of the Ad hoc Committee. What must be avoided however is loss of focus in technical discussions risking reopening of the areas of agreement and convergence. The energetic efforts deployed by Ambassador Hyltenius to meet these challenges with a sense of realism give us hope and optimism.

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The key to the success of the future convention on chemical weapons will be its appeal to universal adherence. The other day the Group of 21 made unequivocally clear its commitment to a non-discriminatory convention embodying a comprehensive ban on the entire chemical weapons cycle. With the political authority flowing from the Paris consensus, such a convention can and should command universal adherence on its own merits. My delegation believes that universal adherence could best be ensured not by tactical means but by making the convention attractive to all countries in terms of their security and related economic and political considerations. Compromises on remaining issues, we believe, are possible in a way that would promote this objective by preserving the multilateral character of this instrument in its broadest sense. It is therefore necessary now to make a renewed effort to tackle the outstanding political issues with a view to taking a decision. Any deflection of the time available to matters of which some could best be handled by a preparatory commission could only lead to a diffusion of focus and loss of momentum. My delegation therefore hopes that such a situation will be avoided and decisive steps will be taken towards the final phase of our negotiations.

Although not directly related to the CD, the fourth review conference of the NPT, scheduled to take place later this year, will be an event of relevance to our work. Sri Lanka, as a State party to the NPT, and one which took an active part in the third review conference, looks forward to a successful fourth review. We do so with the knowledge that non-nuclear States parties by their scrupulous compliance with the Treaty - a fact recorded by successive review conferences - have established an important international norm, not by words but by deeds. For the fourth review conference to be a successful one, the most important prerequisite would be the reaffirmation of the confidence of States parties to the Treaty that the NPT obligations have been honoured by all States parties and in all respects. Whilst we welcome the progress made in bilateral nuclear arms limitation efforts, we are disappointed that multilateral manifestations in that direction were not forthcoming. Tangible progress towards negotiating a comprehensive test-ban treaty and satisfactory solutions to legitimate demands from non-nuclear countries for security assurances against nuclear weapons would be of fundamental importance for continued confidence in the NPT and to ensure a successful review process. Non-nuclear countries have taken courageous political decisions in keeping with their security interests, to join the NPT and to honour faithfully the commitments thus undertaken despite conceptual anomalies inherent in that instrument.

The genesis of political compromises that led to the realization of the NPT would indicate that the longevity of the Treaty will progressively be tested through the passage of time and the implementation of the Treaty in all aspects. If multilateral work in the areas which I referred to earlier remain paralysed it would give rise to concerns about the viability and credibility of the non-proliferation Treaty particularly in an environment where the utility of nuclear weapons and their vertical proliferation continue to be expounded. This will also act as a barrier against much desired wider adherence to the NPT.

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In conclusion, it is time that we display the necessary political will to revitalize this body and enable it to discharge its vital and unique mandate. Our agenda is rich in content and potential. We of course can and must improve on it. As your predecessor, the distinguished Ambassador of the Netherlands, observed at the end of his presidency:

"... the CD should take into account the exciting events which are occurring almost daily and which cannot leave our work in the CD unaffected. Indeed, the chances for a convergence of views and the conclusion of agreements concerning multilateral disarmament are greater than ever."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Kamal.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): Mr. President, I should like to extend to you my personal as well as my delegation's warmest felicitations on your presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the current month and to assure you of our full co-operation in the fulfilment of your important task. I should also like to take this opportunity to compliment your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Hendrik Wagenmakers of the Netherlands, for the competent manner in which he guided us through the first stage of our spring session.

A number of colleagues have left us since the last time I addressed the Conference. May I take this opportunity to wish them every success in their future assignments.

The absence of Ambassador García Robles of Mexico from our midst will be felt particularly by all of us. His retirement after a long and distinguished career in the service of his country has left a void which will be difficult to fill. His work in the field of disarmament and his commitment to the furtherance of world peace has been recognized internationally. Don Alfonso has played a great innings and has earned a well deserved rest. My delegation and I take this opportunity to wish him a very happy retirement.

Since this is the first time I am taking the floor during the current session, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues, the Ambassadors of Argentina, Canada, China, Cuba, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the United States and Venezuela. My delegation looks forward to working in close co-operation with them in the months ahead.

My statement today will address some of the issues which we believe have gained in importance because of the changing realities on the world scene.

Our session this year starts on an auspicious note. The events of the last six months in Europe have given this continent a new look. The fabric of mutual distrust and hostility woven during the cold war years is being replaced by a spirit of dialogue and understanding. Fear of negotiation has given way to a bold and co-operative relationship between the super-Powers. Arms control negotiations appear to be making rapid progress, and the world

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community is expectantly waiting for some major breakthrough during the months ahead. The pace of developments has demonstrated that the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear and conventional forces is a realistic objective, that it can be achieved in a way which enhances the security of all concerned, and that when the requisite political will exists, problems of a technical nature do not present insurmountable obstacles.

However, for the sake of realism, we have to admit that in the world of today, agreements between the two super-Powers alone to limit their arsenals and reduce their force levels do not constitute a sufficient guarantee for peace and security. Similarly, we would be deluding ourselves were we to pretend that all conflicts in our world are attributable to East-West tensions. We cannot, and we should not, ignore the fact that peace and tranquillity is increasingly being endangered not by super-Power rivalries, but by the primitive impulses of many a newly emerging regional Power seeking to dominate its neighbours. It is surely paradoxical that while the two super-Powers are beginning to move towards reducing their stockpiles of lethal weapons under conditions of growing mutual accommodation and understanding, there are developing countries which are diverting more and more of their scarce resources in men and material to the production and acquisition of weapons.

We are fully convinced that in order to reinforce the structure of world peace and security, it is absolutely essential that the commitment to disarmament should be extended to the regional level as well. The removal of tensions and the elimination of conflicts from various regions of the world is a vital element in the search for international security. This can become possible through the equitable settlement of disputes and by the establishment of a military balance which ensures security at the lowest level of armaments. The former requires a clear desire on the part of the different parties, particularly the militarily more powerful States, to address the root causes of regional disputes without trying to bulldoze them under the carpet of oblivion. The latter would have to take into consideration not only the respective military capabilities, acquisitions from external sources, levels of sophistication of arms, and indigenous production facilities of the States involved, but also their histories of past tensions, and their fears and doubts about ambitions for regional hegemony. Measures to create a regional balance, in our view, play an important role in the creation of a climate of mutual trust and confidence, which is an important prerequisite for progress towards disarmament.

We feel that because of the importance of the regional dimension of disarmament, the item should be placed on our agenda for our consideration. As the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, it is here in the CD that the question of regional disarmament ought to be addressed.

The expansion and modernization of naval forces by some States beyond the legitimate requirements of coastal defence has caused smaller States to feel insecure and threatened. This expansion, combined with increased sophistication of sea-based weapons systems, the deployment at sea of nuclear weapons, both strategic and tactical, and the introduction of nuclear-powered

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submarines in different regions of the world, has given an alarming capability to the navies of a few States. As a result of these developments, the security of the small and medium-sized coastal States is now threatened from the sea on an unprecedented scale. This question of naval disarmament and the placing of limits on the military uses of the high seas, therefore, also deserves to be addressed by the Conference on Disarmament. Measures which could be discussed under this head could include effective nuclear disarmament at sea, limitation of the blue-water forces of major naval Powers, and increased sea-front security for the small and medium-sized coastal States. The capability for overseas power projection should be severely restricted.

Even though we are concentrating all our energies on the early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention, a goal in which my delegation is duly participating, we cannot ignore the fact that the question of a nuclear test ban remains the most pressing item on our agenda. This is a reflection, in the first place, of the primary importance which the cessation of nuclear testing occupies within the process of nuclear disarmament, and secondly, of our failure to achieve a comprehensive test ban, despite years of discussion and debate in a variety of international forums. No other question in the field of disarmament, it has been rightly said, has been the subject of so much study and discussion. And yet the prospects of a comprehensive test-ban treaty appear today to be as bleak as they were in 1962.

During the latter half of the 1970s, we were informed that the trilateral negotiations then in progress between the signatories offered the best way forward and that multilateral negotiations would interfere with and complicate the trilateral talks. However, after 1980, the trilateral negotiations were not resumed and the working groups set up in 1982 and 1983 wound up in abstract discussion. Since 1984, it has not been possible to set up a subsidiary body on the subject because of the opposition of a group of States to giving it an appropriate mandate. It is unfortunate that the mandate question continues to frustrate efforts to set up an ad hoc committee empowered to exercise substantively all relevant aspects of a nuclear test ban.

It is this frustration with the lack of progress in the Conference which has prompted more than 50 signatories to the partial test-ban Treaty to seek an amendment conference so as to convert it into a CTBT. We have heard arguments around this table that the appropriate forum to negotiate a test ban is the Conference on Disarmament, and that this objective cannot be achieved by convening an amendment conference. While we have no quarrel with the first argument we feel that countries which are sincerely interested in a test ban should use whatever means are available at their disposal to achieve their goal. If the initiative for an amendment conference is successful then it will have been well worth the effort.

Our discussions on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference are most relevant inasmuch as we feel that a review of our working methods, like that of any organization, should be a continuous process. We do not believe in change for the sake of change, but in view of the changing world situation there is a need to have another look at our agenda so that it properly reflects the priorities of the decade ahead of us.

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The Group of Seven has done some very useful work, and their deliberations have produced a wealth of ideas and suggestions. We would propose that the Group be revived and entrusted with the task of suggesting improvements in our existing structure.

We also support the early expansion of the CD by four members as was decided in 1983. However, with the changes in Europe still not completed, we should be very careful not to disturb the delicate political balance which is one of the essential prerequisites for the effective functioning of our Conference.

Opportunities for disarmament must not be missed. The widespread expectations raised as a result of the improvement in East-West relations should be complemented by measures to meet the challenges of our age. The question that confronts us today is whether we have the vision and courage to act in concert to ensure an era of peace and progress. The responsibility we face is heavy and we in the Conference on Disarmament should ensure that we do not condemn our future. We must rationalize our agenda so as to bring it into closer relevance with some of the grave problems facing us, and address it with a renewed resolve and a heightened sense of urgency. Given the political will and a constructive approach on the part of all its members there is no reason why the Conference on Disarmament cannot come up with a response commensurate with the historical proportions of the challenge that it faces.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. That concludes my list of speakers today. Does any other member wish to take the floor?

The secretariat has circulated today, at my request, a timetable for meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. The timetable has been prepared in consultation with the chairmen of subsidiary bodies. It is, as usual, merely indicative and may be amended, if necessary. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for today. I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday 27 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.