

(The President)

... We shall now proceed to the order of business for today. There are a number of urgent organizational matters which need to be settled to permit the Conference to start its consideration of matters of substance. I refer to the adoption of the agenda and programme of work, as well as the re-establishment of subsidiary bodies on various items on the agenda. I hope, in particular, that we can soon resume our work on a convention banning chemical weapons, in the spirit of the agreement achieved in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference. I am encouraged by the progress noted in my consultations on the mandate to be adopted for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Early agreement on that text will make it possible to intensify our negotiations under the dynamic chairmanship of Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden. I am expecting that we shall re-establish today the Ad hoc Committees on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons and on Radiological Weapons, with their present mandates, and appoint their Chairmen. As the agenda item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" is one of the major issues before the international community, I also hope that the Ad hoc Committee dealing with that question will begin its work without delay. I believe that, if we succeed in taking the relevant decisions quickly, the Conference will have made a good start.

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(Mr. Komatina, Secretary-General of the
Conference and Personal Representative of
the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

... "I have often stressed the overriding importance of the early conclusion of a multilateral agreement on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. In 1989 political consensus was advanced in the international community on the urgent need to agree on such a convention. There now exist ever-growing resolve and an explicit pledge to deal with pending problems at the earliest possible date. The Final Declaration of 149 States at the Paris Conference testified to the truly universal awareness of the need to eradicate chemical weapons for ever. In that connection, I also commend the initiative of the Government of Australia to strengthen and expand co-operation between the chemical industry and Governments by convening a Government-Industry Conference in Canberra.

"Once again I appeal to the members of the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to use the political momentum generated by all those events and intensify during this current session the negotiations for the final elaboration of the convention. There is no justification for unnecessary delay. I am confident that all States will abide by their commitments to achieve that objective.