

(Mr. Nasser, Islamic Republic of Iran)

... True that there has been movement in reducing the number of nuclear warheads. True also that prospects for a nuclear test ban seems more realistic today. But these are not enough. A comprehensive test-ban treaty would be an important effective instrument to prevent further proliferation of nuclear arms in all its aspects. We shall not forget, nonetheless, that it will still be another instrument for the purpose of ensuring non-proliferation. As such, and in the absence of a well-defined and established programme for nuclear disarmament, one cannot be certain of a world free of nuclear weapons at some envisaged time in our future. Yet, even for the nuclear test ban, despite encouraging signals, there are still arguments against immediate action and calls to continue business as usual. Negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty thus remain pending.

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9

Baron GUILLAUME (Belgium) (translated from French): Welcoming the moves made recently by Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin to extend their moratoriums on nuclear testing and by President Mitterand to participate actively within the CD in negotiations on a universal and internationally verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty, I should not like to let slip the opportunity now given to me to comment on the two drafts, a draft decision and a draft mandate, which have been submitted to us and to reiterate Belgium's position on the subject.

Like other delegations which have already taken the floor, and in keeping with the habitual procedure within the CD, our preference, while we would not reject the draft decision route if there were consensus on it, goes rather to the second proposal. It has the advantage of going straight to the desired end, that of giving the Ad Hoc Committee a negotiating mandate. In our view, a comprehensive test-ban treaty should, moreover, have to have the following characteristics: it should be negotiated from the outset in all its aspects within the Conference on Disarmament; it should be of universal application and internationally and effectively verifiable. There in brief you have the content in which we view our participation in the negotiations, which we hope will soon begin, for a comprehensive test-ban treaty.