

(Mr. Nettel, Austria)

the extension of the working groups' mandate, as decided recently by the Committee, to be an important step forward. Any concrete achievement towards the elaboration of a convention will be highly appreciated by the second special session, which will judge the Committee not by its words, but by its deeds.

As regards the consideration of nuclear disarmament by the Committee on Disarmament we learned with some apprehension that there had been no progress at all. Looking in particular for the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban, my Government regrets that the trilateral talks have not been resumed and that it has not been possible to establish within the Committee a working group, which, to a certain extent, might have been instrumental for the reopening of these trilateral negotiations. As a consequence, at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, Austria joined those States which stressed the necessity to give high priority to the CTB issue and which requested the Committee to initiate substantive negotiations, which should be conducted in a working group established to that effect. It is therefore with much regret that we have learned these days that the Committee so far has again been unable to establish such a group. If the creation of a formal group is considered too far-reaching a step by certain delegations, all possibilities for intermediate measures should be explored so as to take appropriately into account the high priority mark assigned to this item by the international community as a whole.

May I also briefly mention our continuing interest in the issue of non-proliferation. This concern is clearly demonstrated by the fact that this year's International Seminar for young diplomats at Klesheim Castle in Austria will deal exclusively with the question of non-proliferation. We do hope that one or another junior representative to the Committee will be able to attend this Seminar.

May I refer again to the last General Assembly because that body is, for a non-member of the Committee, the focus of its disarmament policies and the main forum for the presentation of new ideas concerning international security in particular. In his statement delivered on 1 October 1981, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, W.P. Pahr, expressed concern regarding the continuing arms race and the failure with respect to balanced disarmament. He suggested that objective procedures for assessing and verifying the true level of armament in the world could contribute to a process of the progressive and balanced lowering of these levels. Our proposal to study mechanisms, to which could be entrusted the task of verifying and evaluating the state of armament on an objective basis, was the subject of consultations. In the light of the reactions received, the initial project was re-examined by my authorities and the revised version circulated in New York as a working paper (A/C.1/36/14), which might serve as a basis for further consideration, possibly within the framework of the second special session. I and my colleagues would be ready to discuss this matter informally with the members of the Committee and would welcome further reactions on this issue, which is related to the area of confidence-building measures, as well as to that of verification and, through these links, also connected to the concept of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Confidence-building constitutes an important feature of another subject-matter under consideration by the Committee on Disarmament, the so-called security guarantees, which my delegation prefers to label "commitments not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States". May I refer in this connection to another proposal by the Austrian Government, which I had the honour to present to the Committee in July of last year. At that time, I referred in particular to certain doubts which arose with