

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 1988 session and the 436th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

It is with deep regret that we have learnt, during the inter-sessional period, of the loss of our former colleague and good friend, Ambassador Ian Cromartie, who did so much to advance the work of the Conference. He served his country with distinction, being, as he was, an outstanding diplomat. His special personality made him respected and earned him our esteem and admiration as he harmonized so well professional ability with personal integrity. He served as President of the Conference, as well as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I hardly need to recall how effectively he discharged these difficult tasks. In particular, progress towards a convention banning chemical weapons achieved special impetus during his guidance of the work of the Ad hoc Committee. On behalf of the Conference and on behalf of my delegation, I wish to extend heartfelt condolences to the delegation of the United Kingdom and to his family.

I invite you all to join me in a minute of silence as a tribute to the memory of our good friend Ian Cromartie.

CD/PV.436

7

(The President)

- The more favourable conditions which have emerged are an encouragement to the Conference on Disarmament to produce, at last, the concrete results expected of it. What I have in mind, first of all, are the negotiations on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. The Committee, under the able guidance of Ambassador Ekéus, has made remarkable progress. It should be possible now, in a comparatively short span of time, to cast the agreement that already exists on fundamental issues into additional Convention text and to work out further details.