

Mr. RI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (translated from French):
Allow me first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate you warmly on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this important stage and to wish you every success in your responsible task. This session of the Conference on Disarmament is about to complete its work in a very different climate from those that preceded it in recent years. Internationally, where tensions are diminishing and confrontation is giving way to reconciliation and cooperation, the peoples of the world no longer wish to return to the cold war, but ardently desire real disarmament being brought about as quickly as possible in order to maintain security and lasting peace. Most particularly, having witnessed the development of the situation that arose before and during the Gulf war, which took place under the threat of the use of nuclear and chemical weapons, they aspire to seeing the day come soon when our planet will be free for ever from power politics and sophisticated war matériel, which have caused immeasurable misfortune and suffering to a great many innocent inhabitants of that region.

In order to establish lasting peace and security around the world and to bring about development, there must be an end to the source of the factor of disturbance. At the present stage disarmament or arms control is not for most developing countries an immediate priority because they do not have an immense quantity of weapons to reduce, nor are they able to take part in the arms race, as the great Powers are. However, international relations today oblige them to attach great importance to disarmament. This is because comprehensive and global disarmament is vital for them, given the history of colonization by armed forces, the two major world wars that covered the globe, several hundreds of clashes and violent postwar conflicts - here I would like to stress that almost 170 armed conflicts, large and small, which have followed more than four decades of the postwar period, have broken out, all of them in the developing countries - and the current state of affairs under the permanent threat of nuclear weapons. The latter do not need the circumstances in which they will be obliged to spend considerable sums on importing weapons from the developed countries, but a climate of peace in which they can devote those sums to economic recovery. In other words, they need relations of international cooperation for their prosperity, but not a military threat from which they must suffer directly or indirectly. In short, this is tantamount to saying that it is incumbent upon the developed countries in general and the nuclear-weapon States in particular, beginning with the super-Powers, to be in a position, indeed to have the duty, to establish in the sphere of disarmament such an international climate of peace for humanity. With this in view, we welcome the agreement on the complete destruction of chemical weapons arrived at by the Americano-Soviet super-Powers, and the signing of the Treaty on intermediate nuclear forces and the START Treaty, and we also appreciate the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. As everyone is aware, such occurrences did not come about because of the talent of a few individuals, but were the result of a policy following the political will of the authorities. Consequently, we are persuaded that it is only when not only their political promise, whether in the case of a treaty, a convention or an agreement, has been implemented as quickly as possible, but also when it has been extended to a great many other sectors and regions, that the multilateral negotiations on disarmament will easily attain their final objective.