

Mr. EDIS (United Kingdom): In the unavoidable absence of my Ambassador because of a ministerial visit to another conference, I should like to pay tribute to the skill and hard work which Ambassador Turbanski has brought to the task of chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

The United Kingdom delegation will do its best to carry forward this honourable burden at our next session.

I know that my Ambassador will wish to take a future opportunity to express more formally our appreciation to Ambassador Turbanski as well as to his colleagues from Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Germany, Indonesia and Sweden, who also made important contributions.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): On behalf of the Group of Socialist Countries, I wish to make a statement concerning the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space for the 1986 session of the Conference on Disarmament. The socialist countries reaffirm their position already stated in connection with the adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons that the Chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should rotate, as is the case with other Committees of the Conference on Disarmament. That is the reason why the socialist countries put forward their suggestion to include in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, for its 1985 session, and contained in document CD/641, a recommendation concerning the chairmanship of that Committee in 1986. We consider this a normal practice for which precedents already exist. With this in mind, and in conformity with the principle of rotation, the socialist countries gave their consent to including in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, the recommendation for the candidature put forward by the group of Western countries, in connection with the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, next year. We did this, however, on the assumption that the same principle would be applied to the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. I informed the Conference already that Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia would be the candidate of the Group of Socialist Countries for the chairmanship of that Committee for the 1986 session.