

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, allow me first of all to tell you how happy my delegation is to see you presiding over our work at a time that is so critical for the future of the Conference on Disarmament, whether as regards the expansion of the membership or the forthcoming negotiation of a nuclear-test-ban treaty. We wish you all the best in your mission and naturally assure you of the full support of our delegation.

The Conference on Disarmament has just adopted by consensus, paragraph 13 of the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events (CD/1211). On this occasion my delegation would like to stress the following points. As the Chairman of the Group of Scientific Experts (GSE) himself said at our last plenary meeting, this Group was set up in 1976 and over the last few years has been working on the basis of a project which dates back to that time. As all of us will remember, the nuclear-test-ban treaty envisaged at that time by three countries, provided only for a lightweight, national verification regime. That is why under the seismological network as designed at present the detected data will be retransmitted only to participating States to be analysed by each of them for purposes of national verification.

Today we find ourselves in a new context: the Conference on Disarmament in its recent decision CD/1212, undertook to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty which is global and internationally and effectively verifiable, in order to contribute to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. We therefore believe that it is important for the Conference to review the present concept of a seismological network in the light of these criteria and adopt the necessary decisions to ensure that this network can meet the requirements of negotiations on the future treaty. My delegation has taken note of the readiness of the Group of Scientific Experts to change the pace of work it has followed hitherto. But it is not just a matter of the pace at which the Group works - it is the whole of its task which is now indissolubly

(Mr. Errera, France)

linked to the future negotiations. Therefore, in the eyes of my delegation the fact that the Conference on Disarmament has adopted paragraph 13 of the report of the GSE today can in no way prejudice the overall concept of the verification regime for a future comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, nor the arrangements for its implementation, which can stem only from the negotiation of such a treaty by the Conference on Disarmament.