

(The President)

We may not be entirely satisfied with the results reached so far in multilateral forums or in the multilateral negotiations on disarmament issues but we also have good reasons for an encouraging assessment of future prospects. First of all, we should take stock of the progress achieved in past months on certain important issues, in particular in the field of negotiations on a chemical weapons ban.

CD/PV.484

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(The President)

Finally, as I have already pointed out, the recent Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons was a most successful and significant event, particularly in the way it underlined the commitment to conclude, at the earliest date, the negotiations on a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons.

All of us recognize that the major Powers have special responsibilities for the prevention of war, for preventing international tensions and for the reduction of nuclear and conventional arsenals, yet every country has its own share of responsibility in contributing what it can to such noble goals. The preservation of world peace and security as well as the realization of genuine disarmament are the common aspiration of the peoples of all countries, besides constituting the main task of the Conference on Disarmament. I therefore believe that it falls to all of us to provide the opportunity for imparting new momentum to the process of disarmament, by pursuing its objectives with determination and preventing any risk of a stalemate in multilateral negotiations, which would mark a sharp contrast with the dynamism in bilateral negotiations.

The more favourable conditions which have emerged should be an encouragement to the Conference on Disarmament to produce more concrete results. In this respect allow me to make a particular reference to the negotiations on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. I have already mentioned the significant progress achieved by the Ad hoc Committee during the last session - for which our appreciation goes to Ambassador Sujka for the competent guidance of our deliberations - and the importance of the results of the Paris Conference. We should now be able to speed up the negotiating process and make every possible effort to reach a final agreement at the earliest date.