

(Mr. Qian, China)

... The United Nations has done a great deal of work in the field of multilateral disarmament. Many positive resolutions and documents on disarmament have been adopted at successive United Nations General Assembly sessions, SSQDs, the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and the international conferences on chemical weapons. The World Disarmament Campaign sponsored by the United Nations, and many special studies on arms reduction issues, have helped promote the disarmament efforts of all Governments and peoples. The Conference on Disarmament is playing a uniquely important role as the sole global multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and has, in particular, registered noted progress in the negotiations regarding a convention on the prohibition of CW.

One may recall that back in the early 1980s the United States and the Soviet Union continuously escalated the arms race between them and engaged in intense rivalry in many parts of the world. This was criticized and opposed by peoples of all countries, as the tension and confrontation between them constituted a grave threat to world security and stability. At the same time, their incessant arms expansion imposed a heavy burden on them and added to their fiscal and economic difficulties. Against this background, the two super-Powers have made some headway in arms control negotiations over the past few years. After a number of summit meetings and lengthy negotiations, they finally concluded a treaty on the total destruction of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. Their bilateral negotiations on the reduction of strategic nuclear arms and on chemical weapons are gradually moving ahead. The CFE negotiations are also making headway. This is well received by peoples of all countries. It should be noted, however, that the above-mentioned progress is preliminary and limited, that there is still a long way to go as far as disarmament is concerned, and that there are numerous obstacles and difficulties on the way ahead. Even if the United States and the Soviet Union were to cut their strategic nuclear arsenals by half, they would still possess over 90 per cent of all the nuclear weapons in the world, more than enough to destroy the whole of mankind several times over, thus remaining the biggest threat to international security.