

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

At the outset of the spring session of the Conference a year ago there was a common feeling of a new favourable development. The agreement reached by the ministers of foreign affairs of the USSR and the United States to start negotiations on nuclear and space arms in their interrelationship, which was generally viewed as a harbinger of improvement of the international political climate, thus creating hopes for more fruitful work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Since then a further improvement of the international atmosphere took place. The bilateral talks in Geneva became reality. The Third Review Conference of the NPT brought about an encouraging result and the auspicious Soviet-American summit meeting was held in Geneva. Our hopes were growing. Unfortunately, only hopes since, in principle, no real progress in disarmament was achieved, especially in areas of highest priority i.e. nuclear and space weapons. With regard to the Conference on Disarmament it would have been understandable to some extent if we were negotiating, but failed in reaching results. But this was not the case. We all know the deplorable truth -- we were not negotiating on these very issues because some delegations were not ready for it and made impossible the establishment of appropriate working bodies.

My delegation expects that such a situation will not be repeated this year and that we shall be able to start business-like dialogue and negotiations on various aspects of nuclear disarmament and on preventing an arms race in outer space as well as on other issues on our agenda. We base this expectation on a generally expressed opinion, including in this chamber, which we fully share, that the present political climate is more beneficial to disarmament efforts. More specifically I would point out new significant prerequisites which should be helpful and stimulating to the Conference's work. I have in mind the Soviet-American Joint Statement that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought", that the Soviet Union and the United States "will not seek to achieve military superiority" and other commitments which came out from the summit and which so often have been quoted in this hall. The Soviet-American Joint Statement has to be viewed as a political decision of highest importance, but it will bring the desired effects only if followed by practical steps.