

15. A nuclear-weapon State, member of that group, expressed its continued commitment to the early achievement of a comprehensive test ban as not only a measure to curb the nuclear arms race but an important means of promoting non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well. Based on this assessment of the importance and the role of this problem in world affairs, it was prepared to use all possible ways and means in order to reach its early resolution - be it through bilateral negotiations or multilateral efforts, through widening the scope of the 1963 Moscow Treaty or through a joint declaration together with the United States on a nuclear tests moratorium. It continued to believe that a step-by-step approach to the achievement of a comprehensive ban was justifiable. It pointed to that approach in its bilateral negotiations on nuclear testing with the United States and stressed that the first goal of those negotiations had been reached with the signing of the two Protocols to the Threshold Test Ban Treaty of 1974 and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty of 1976. It underlined its support for a continuation of those negotiations to consider further limitations on the quantity and yield of nuclear tests. It stated its conviction that a final resolution of the problem of stopping nuclear tests required focusing the efforts of relevant multilateral bodies as well. In its view, bilateral and multilateral efforts may and should complement each other. It expressed the opinion that such a representative forum as the Conference on Disarmament would also make its tangible contribution to the solution of this problem through its Ad Hoc Committee.

16. A group of Western countries continued to stress its commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons, in peace and stability. Members of the group firmly re-stated their belief that the Conference on Disarmament, as the only global multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament questions, was the most appropriate place for in-depth discussion of multilateral aspects of a nuclear test ban. They welcomed the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee, the work of which would inevitably be of a step-by-step nature. The Group favoured a detailed discussion on the whole range of issues related to a nuclear test ban. They noted that the Committee's mandate did not require it to enter into negotiation of a treaty text, and that before that stage could be reached there was much work to be done. They felt that much relevant work had been done since the Conference had last established a subsidiary body on nuclear testing, particularly on development and implementation of verification measures. They pointed particularly to the important work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts and, in the bilateral field, to procedures developed by the United States and the Soviet Union for verification of 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty and 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty. They noted, however, that adequate means for effectively verifying a comprehensive test ban were not yet at hand, and that further work on the whole range of monitoring techniques remained to be undertaken.

17. A nuclear weapon State, member of the Western group, reaffirmed once again that a comprehensive test ban remained a long-term objective. It still maintained that a comprehensive ban must be seen in the context of a time when it is no longer necessary to depend on nuclear deterrence to ensure international security and stability. It again stressed that the following needed to be achieved before reaching agreement on a comprehensive ban: broad, deep and verifiable arms reductions; greatly improved verification capabilities; expanded confidence-building measures and greater balance in