

MR. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): Mr. President, as is our pattern, many delegations have again devoted the opening period of the annual session of the Conference to a general assessment of the overall political situation in which we have resumed our work. This stocktaking has proved very useful. My delegation notes with satisfaction that it has generated a certain amount of common views. All delegations agree that the new year has started under favourable new circumstances for the arms control process and that progress towards a more stable and co-operative relationship between the two important military systems, but also, generally, progress towards a more peaceful world less dependent on the massive accumulation of armament appears now possible. Delegations have also agreed that these opportunities must be actively seized, and that a particular and considerable task awaits the Conference on Disarmament. We are called upon to do substantive work in appropriate organizational formats on as many of our agreed agenda items as is feasible.

As last year, many delegations have dwelt upon the role of the multilateral arms-control process at a time when much immediate attention is focused upon the on-going bilateral negotiation process. Indeed, my delegation agrees that our assignment in this initial phase of our annual work should be to define more clearly and more actively the relationship between bilateral arms control and multilateral disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament. Foreign Minister Genscher, when he spoke at this Conference last year, called for a constructive parallelism of both, recognizing the necessary juxtaposition and mutual reinforcing role of both aspects of disarmament. It is not difficult to find rational objective criteria by which the multilateral domain can be defined and delineated from its bilateral complement. Global security issues need global solutions. There are domains where, by the very nature of the subject matter, it is clear that only global regulation can provide durable solutions. The negotiations on the global and effective elimination of chemical weapons are, as we all agree, very much a case in point.

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15

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

My delegation is conscious that the area in which some progress has been registered is in the field of a chemical-weapons ban. We would like to congratulate Ambassador Turbanski of Poland of having chaired the