

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

The negotiation of a treaty on radiological weapons is a subject both misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is asked: "Why does progress elude us in a blatant, not to say scandalous, manner"? Before I proceed to answer this question I wish to express my own bewilderment at the absence of similar questioning about the CTBT, cessation of the nuclear arms race and prevention of nuclear war, negative security assurances, and the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament; all issues of higher priority than the prohibition of the non-existing radiological weapons. Is it that some of us wish to compensate for lack of political will to negotiate on these questions with a cosmetic radiological weapons treaty and present it to the world as evidence of "the momentum of the multilateral disarmament progress" to which they are "diligently" contributing in the Committee? In our view the Committee's image will suffer greatly if it were to hastily conclude a radiological weapons treaty merely to give a facade of progress. It can have intrinsic value only with a clear reiteration of commitments to nuclear disarmament and to peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The inclusion of these provisions at any rate is an issue which in our view is not unresolvable. But we are of the firm opinion that an agreement on the substance of the proposed treaty can only be reached in the light of: (i) the recognition of the fact that attacks on nuclear facilities are the most practical form that radiological warfare can take; and (ii) a demonstration of the political will to substantively negotiate on a prohibition of such attacks, in the Committee on Disarmament.

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(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

Turning to radiological weapons, my delegation is very disappointed at the lack of progress. In an attempt to speed up matters the Working Group agreed to set up separate co-ordination groups to deal with what we have come to call the "traditional radiological weapons treaty", and the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. The work in these two groups was ably and energetically led by Mr. Busby of the United States delegation and Mr. Prokofiev of the Soviet delegation, and I wish to pay tribute to both of them. Mr. Busby exerted the greatest efforts to break through the difficulties, which, for years, had surrounded the negotiations of a treaty on radiological weapons; and he has succeeded in producing a text which, we believe, would provide a good basis for further negotiations, even though we have reservations about a number of the suggestions which it contains. It is the view of my delegation that agreement could quickly be reached on such a treaty if we were to concentrate on essentials: but we shall not do so if some delegations continue to insist on trying to solve, in this context, problems which we have not been able to solve elsewhere, and which have slight, if any, genuine connection with the subject-matter of the treaty.

My delegation is also disappointed at the outcome of the work on prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. Once again, a small group of delegations has continued to insist that a prohibition must be all-embracing, in spite of the fact, which must be as obvious to them as it is to us, that such an all-embracing prohibition could neither be practically implemented nor theoretically justified. As a result, no progress has been made this year, and none is likely to be made until there is agreement on the general principles on which a future legal instrument could be based.