

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian):

... Today's meeting is a farewell meeting for me, since I am leaving my post as representative of the USSR at the Conference on Disarmament for a new assignment. It gives me satisfaction to recognize that in the two years and three months during which I have represented my country at the Conference, the international situation has undergone important positive changes. They have had a tangible effect on the work of the Conference on Disarmament. In the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, major advances have been made which have brought us closer to the conclusion of the convention, although progress in the negotiations has alternated with a slowing of the pace of work. I do not intend in today's statement to analyse the status of the negotiations. An assessment has been provided today on behalf of the Group of Socialist Countries by its co-ordinator for this month, the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Peter Dietze. I would like in a purely personal way to express my regret that I did not manage to take part in the completion of the draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, including its final drafting. I hope that this stage is not far distant. I also regret the fact that during the period in which I occupied the post of representative of the USSR at the Conference, we were not able to set up a working body on a nuclear test ban. I think that it has finally become possible for the Conference to begin practical work in earnest on this problem, which for many years has been item 1 on its agenda. This work must bring us closer to the achievement of a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests, an important measure to curb the arms race.

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish):

... In respect of the second of the items I mentioned above, that is the elimination of chemical weapons, we should bear in mind the importance of the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States, which met in Paris from 7 to 11 January of the current year under the chairmanship of M. Roland Dumas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic. Mexico, which became a party to this Protocol without reservations in 1932, welcomed with satisfaction the provisions of the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference, and along with all the participating States stressed "the necessity of concluding, at an early date, a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and on their destruction", and to that end called on the Conference on Disarmament to "redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date". The convention, as we have already said, will represent no threat to the security of any State; rather, it will strengthen the security of one and all.