

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

1988 was the year when the tide turned. 1988 was the year when nuclear disarmament began. 1988 was the year of hope. As the poem reads:

"Hope is the bird which senses the dawn and sings while it is dark."

It is still dark. The world is loaded with weapons - conventional weapons, chemical weapons, nuclear weapons. But the mistrust is receding like mist on an early spring morning, as the late Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme said in his last interview three years ago.

... To this positive picture may be added the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons a month ago. With some 150 nations participating, at political or high governmental level, the Conference became a powerful manifestation of the world community's repudiation of chemical arms. The unanimously adopted Final Document is an equally important and welcome success for international disarmament work.

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... It is sufficient to ask the question: How could two States achieve a total ban on nuclear tests when six have already exploded nuclear devices and a few more have the technical capacity to do so? Or to mention the burning issue of the Paris Conference: How could two States - no matter how powerful - free the world from chemical weapons when in principle all States with a modern chemical industry are in a position to manufacture such weapons? Or how could the prevention of an arms race in outer space be ensured except through multilateral action? The international community has expressed its firm stand that the exploration and use of outer space must be for peaceful purposes and to the benefit of the whole of mankind.

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... My delegation will listen with great interest to the statement by the Foreign Minister of France, Mr. Roland Dumas, and his report on the results of the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons. As I mentioned earlier, the Paris Conference was an important success in terms of the task entrusted to it. The international community was able to concentrate on one priority issue - that of chemical disarmament. The Conference raised the barrier against using chemical weapons by unanimously condemning such use. It reaffirmed the commitment to the Geneva Protocol and the urgent necessity of concluding a comprehensive convention banning chemical weapons at the earliest date.