

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

Bearing in mind the changing international situation and the importance that the Government of Mexico attributes to the work that has been assigned to us, allow me to read the message that President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has addressed to the Conference:

"Today the Conference on Disarmament is once again taking up its important task, at a time of renewed hope in disarmament. The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have begun talks and negotiations on a number of issues, beginning with nuclear disarmament, and the community of nations is witnessing the emergence of fresh and encouraging developments in the search for international peace and security.

"The Conference on Disarmament now has before it a major opportunity to translate this climate of détente into specific agreements on the priority issues: nuclear disarmament, and more particularly the cessation of all nuclear tests, and the elimination of chemical weapons.

"Disarmament has been under discussion at the Palais des Nations in Geneva for over a half a century. We ought now to move forward along the path marked out by the United Nations to achieve a safer world with fewer weapons. The ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control remains as valid today as it was in 1962 when this Conference began its work.

"As members of the Conference on Disarmament, all of us have a duty and an obligation to fulfil the hopes of the peoples of the world, to banish the spectre of war and its deadly instruments. The bilateral understandings should be followed by disarmament agreements negotiated on a multilateral basis. The most pressing issue is the total suspension of nuclear tests. A number of possibilities are open to us in order to achieve that objective.

"The elimination of chemical weapons is also a matter of priority. The international community is entitled to demand the rapid conclusion of a convention in this field. We need to draw up a comprehensive programme of disarmament to serve as a framework of our efforts. Not one of us, moreover, is unaware of the close link between disarmament and economic development.