

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

immediate relevance to worldwide security. The proliferation of nuclear weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security, as indicated by the Security Council on 31 January 1992. A nuclear test ban would contribute to ongoing efforts to prevent States from developing a nuclear weapon programme.

A nuclear test ban remains therefore of paramount importance and my Government welcomes the prospects of early negotiations on a nuclear test ban in our Conference on Disarmament. These negotiations would inter alia enable the international community to witness the realization of the goals set out in both the PTBT and the NPT: a discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. This would no doubt further strengthen the international norm against non-proliferation as embodied in the NPT, the future of which will be discussed and decided not too long from now.

Now, some considerations on the specific modalities of our future negotiations. My Government looks forward to the early conclusion of a treaty banning all nuclear tests, that is, not just nuclear weapons tests, but also the so-called "peaceful nuclear explosions". A total ban would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and complement the nuclear disarmament process.

Negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament should be on the full set of issues relevant to a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and not be limited to partial issues like verification. The ban must be negotiated here in Geneva, in the CD. It must subsequently have universal coverage: all States should abide by it. It should also be internationally and effectively verifiable. It is only thus that the goals of non-proliferation, to which we all profess to subscribe one way or another, can be served.

The issue of verification of a nuclear test ban has received attention in the CD since the 1970s. Extensive work on the seismic component, the core of the verification of a future test ban, has already been done. All along the Netherlands has gladly contributed to the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. We are grateful for the promising results obtained so far. Preparations to test the full seismic component of the future verification system are well under way. In that respect the GSETT-3 exercise is of eminent importance. Other than seismic technologies will also be required, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Tanaka, for having guided us through a successful session concentrated on non-seismic techniques from which my delegation has drawn great benefit.

I am sure that Ambassador Tanaka's inter-sessional consultations - the new task entrusted to him by the Conference - will lay a sound foundation for the CD's work in 1994. I gladly pledge my delegation's complete and unreserved support for Ambassador Tanaka's efforts. I am confident the CD will be able to negotiate successfully a multi-faceted verification regime for a nuclear test ban.