

(The President)

On the one hand, the Conference was able to settle some organizational questions and to re-establish some subsidiary bodies on some important items on its agenda. On the other hand, the Conference was unable to conclude, within the time allocated to its spring session, its consultations on the nuclear issues on its agenda as well as other pending matters before it. The Conference was able to re-establish the Ad hoc Committees on Chemical Weapons, on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, and on Radiological Weapons. The Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament resumed its work. I note that all these Ad hoc Committees will continue their valuable work during the summer session, and I would like to thank all their Chairmen for the work done so far in these subsidiary bodies.

I do not wish to comment on the substance of the work being carried out in all these subsidiary bodies, but I do feel that I should make special mention of the work of the Ad hoc Committees on Chemical Weapons, on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. This, of course, does not mean that the work in the other subsidiary bodies is of less importance. I also feel that I should mention briefly the consultations on the nuclear issues on the agenda of the Conference, and some pending matters before the Conference.

The Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons was re-established against the background of the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons which was held in early January this year. The Final Declaration of that conference, which was adopted unanimously by all 149 States attending the Conference, underlined further the determination of States to ban for ever the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and ensure their destruction. This important document urged the Conference on Disarmament to redouble its efforts to conclude a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and on their destruction, at the earliest date. It is hoped that this objective will be realized.

The Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons commenced its work with its existing mandate after some efforts were made by many delegations, albeit without success, to inject some important elements into it which were part of the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference. The work of this subsidiary body is now being conducted in five working groups, each dealing with specific subjects, and it appears that this exciting approach may bear important positive results during the 1989 session of the Conference and the inter-sessional period on many of the outstanding issues under consideration.

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(Mr. Vajnar, Czechoslovakia)

The Czechoslovak delegation welcomes the intensification of work in the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. It represents a precondition for fulfilling the mandate of the Paris Conference, to which we still owe a lot.