

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

Today I take the floor to make my country statement, in which reference will be made to the Australian initiative. Disarmament is not an end itself. Nor is it neutral to ends. It should be linked to the achievement of universal peace and security, development goals, preservation of the environment and the protection of human rights, the most fundamental of which is the right to life. Today human rights issues have come back to centre stage. Destruction of human and other resources and the violation of human rights, together with the diversion of resources for military build-up away from development needs, have had disastrous consequences and long-term effects on the human race in general. At the same time we are living in hope that we are entering a period of greater security and peace. In order to enhance international trust and confidence and to benefit from the conjunction of unprecedented changes in the political and economic fields, at least a part of these hopes must be realized in the immediate future thus sustaining the momentum generated. Transitional difficulties will have to be overcome individually and through international cooperation. These changes can also have such repercussions particularly on developing countries so as to cause international concerns due to inherent inequalities in the system. However, it is imperative that we build a new system structured to withstand adverse developments, by strict adherence to the Charter of the United Nations. There is a great promise that the differences can be narrowed down through diplomatic efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of common security, political stability and economic progress.

The recent world events demonstrated that a stockpile of arms could not act as a deterrent and, equally, that a new world order cannot function effectively unless nations remove the causes that lead to instability, by working as partners. In other words any new world order, to be universally acceptable and effective, should ensure a greater dynamic role for the United Nations. Comprehensive security arrangements that have the widest acceptance will have to be given legitimacy by a process of democratization of actions taken to ensure universal adherence. In the past initial negotiations on a bilateral basis ended up in multilateral treaties to give them a semblance of multilateral acceptance and legitimacy. If decisions are taken outside the multilateral agencies there will be a tendency to use the United Nations as an instrument to carry out those decisions of a selected few. Since the establishment of the CD it has yet to take stock of its achievements in the field of disarmament. We cannot be complacent with the progress made so far by this multilateral negotiating body, particularly compared to the deliberations made. My delegation therefore reiterates the urgent need for the CD to be used as the main forum in carrying out negotiations on all aspects of disarmament. The climate is ripe and advantageous for this and we should not fritter away this opportunity. Nothing is more beneficial to multilateral disarmament than the momentous changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe that have improved the relationships between the two nuclear giants.

We are concerned that since time is running out, the negotiations on a global convention banning chemical weapons which have now reached a peak must be concluded without delay. We are hopeful that the convention will be effective from the beginning of 1993. We are glad to note that all members consider the completion of the draft convention as a matter of urgency.