

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. My delegation is pleased to see you guiding our deliberations. As I said last month in the Group of 21, where you were acting as co-ordinator, you demonstrated truly extraordinary skill and exemplary equanimity and objectivity.

My congratulations are also addressed to Ambassador Datcu, who preceded you as President of our Conference and did his utmost to advance our work during the month of March.

I did not intend to take the floor today. However, the statements which were made this morning, particularly two of them, showed that this session, even though it has dealt with many questions, will enter the annals of the Conference as a session devoted mainly to the question of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. This is a question to which my delegation attaches special importance. Moreover, time is passing inexorably and quite soon the Conference will, I believe, have to take a decision concerning the establishment and mandate of an ad hoc committee. At that time, Mr. President, as has already happened in the case of the proposal for an ad hoc committee on the prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests, it would be appropriate if, unfortunately, it was not possible to set up an ad hoc committee this year and to give it a suitable mandate, it would be appropriate, I repeat, for the records of the Conference to indicate clearly who bears the responsibility. It is for that reason that since I have to date referred to this matter on only one occasion, in the statement I made at the opening meeting this year on 7 February, and I did so then only in a small part of my statement since I had to deal with various subjects, I thought it appropriate to begin to correct this lack of relevant or pertinent information in formal plenary meetings. I say this because it is clear that in informal meetings consisting of four or five or even more participants my delegation has already taken the opportunity to state its position more fully. However, I repeat, I believe that, as I have frequently said, spoken words fly away and it is the written word that remains, according to an old Latin proverb. That is why, at today's meeting, I should like to stress what I said in passing at the opening meeting, namely, that we are not going to deal with this matter as if nothing had happened during the last Assembly. Something very significant occurred at the last Assembly: there was a resolution which obtained the greatest number of votes of all resolutions concerned with disarmament: 147 votes in favour and only 1 against. That resolution was not the result of improvisation, as I also said at the opening meeting and I shall repeat now; it was the outcome of laborious and patient negotiations in which two delegations had to play a primary role: yours, Mr. President, and the delegation of Egypt. There were on that occasion three draft resolutions, one submitted by Mongolia, another by a group of Western European States, and the third was the draft of the Group of 21. Following those laborious negotiations, the co-sponsors of the first two draft resolutions did not press their texts and withdrew them. Then the Assembly adopted, by that truly extraordinary vote, the resolution bearing the number 38/70.

All those who are interested in the question will be able to consult the full text of this resolution in the document which the Secretary-General transmits to us every year and which contains, in an annex to his letter, all the texts of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on disarmament matters. This document is CD/428. Nevertheless, in order that those who may not wish to take the trouble to consult this document can find in the record of today's meeting the main provisions of resolution 38/70, I shall take the liberty of reading them out now.