SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 10 September 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

Acting President: Mr. MÄRTENSON (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs)
President: Mr. KORHONEN (Finland)

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Any corrections to the record of this meeting and of other meetings will be issued in a corrigendum.
11. The present Conference was being held in accordance with article VIII of the Convention and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 37/99 I. The objective was to review the operation of the Convention with a view to ensuring that its purposes and provisions were being realized. In particular, the Conference was entrusted with the task of examining the effectiveness of the provisions of paragraph 1 of article I in eliminating the dangers of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. The Convention was a valuable, if limited, measure of arms control. It constituted an important step towards precluding the possibility of using environmental modification techniques, and it thus furthered the cause of arms control and disarmament in general. Accession to the Convention was still rather limited, the number of States Parties at present being 45. In addition, 19 States had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it.

12. The Conference offered the first opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the obligations laid down in the Convention. It was to be hoped that the general debate and the review of the various provisions of the Convention would serve as a useful basis for constructive consideration of the Convention's effectiveness and would also provide the reference material for the preparation of the final document or documents of the Conference.

13. The review of the Convention should take into account the general considerations set forth in the preamble to the Convention as well as the operative provisions. By helping to promote the Convention's objectives, the review would thus contribute to the cause of halting the arms race and saving mankind from the dangers inherent in the use of new means of warfare. The Conference could also play a major role in the further work of excluding the potential use of environmental warfare in general and the use of environmental modification techniques for military purposes in particular. He counted on the full support of all delegations to the Conference in securing the fulfilment of that objective.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

14. Mr. Martensson (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs), read out the following message from the Secretary-General.

"It gives me great pleasure to extend my greetings and best wishes to all the delegations participating in the First Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

"Your Conference is entrusted with the important task of reviewing the operation of the Convention with a view to ensuring that its purposes and provisions are being realized and examining, in particular, the effectiveness of the provisions of article I of the Convention in eliminating the dangers of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. I am confident that your Conference will so discharge its mandate as to promote wider adherence to the Convention.

"The Convention imposes on States Parties the obligation not to engage in military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques having widespread, long-lasting or severe effects and causing destruction, damage or injury to any other State Party. The potential danger inherent in the development of these techniques through scientific and technical advances hardly needs any emphasis. The Convention was designed to spare mankind from the disastrous consequences of environmental warfare. This purpose needs to be kept constantly in mind."
ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS AND OF THE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE AND THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (agenda item 5)

APPOINTMENT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (agenda item 6 (a))

21. The President drew attention to paragraph 14 of the Final Report of the Preparatory Committee (ENMOD/CONF.I/1), setting forth the Committee's decisions concerning the composition of the General Committee and the geographical distribution of the posts on the Committee. In the absence of objections, he would take it that the Conference wished to confirm those decisions.

22. It was so decided.

23. The President, referring to the subject of the appointment of the Credentials Committee, drew attention to rule 3 of the rules of procedure, which provided that the Committee should be composed of a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman elected by the Conference and of five other members appointed by the Conference on the proposal of the President. On the basis of the precedent established at other Review Conferences, he proposed that the geographical distribution of those seven posts should be as follows: Africa 1; Asia 1; Eastern Europe 2; Latin America 1; and Western Europe and other States 2. In addition, consideration of agenda items 5 and 6 (a) should be deferred to allow time for further consultations.

24. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.