SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 May 1990, at 10 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr. AKASHI (United Nations Under-Secretary-General
for Disarmament Affairs)

President: Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference and said that the Meeting was taking place at a time of rapid and dramatic change. The summit meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States scheduled to begin the following day promised to be yet another milestone in the journey of co-operation upon which those countries had embarked.

2. The number of States parties to the Partial Test Ban Treaty currently stood at 118. In the preamble and article I of the Treaty, the States parties expressed their determination to seek "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time". Article II, paragraph 1, provided for the possibility of proposing amendments to the original text signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963, and it was for that purpose that the current Meeting had been convened.

3. Ever since the conclusion of the Partial Test Ban Treaty it had been the expectation of the international community that efforts would be made to achieve the ultimate objective of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. That item had been the object of more General Assembly resolutions than any other nuclear disarmament issue. It had also been an important item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. While the ultimate objective of a comprehensive test ban was not in question, there were still significant differences of opinion over when and how to proceed to that goal.

4. The Secretary-General had consistently attached high importance to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, noting that no single multilateral agreement could have a greater effect on limiting the further refinement of nuclear weapons.

5. There could be no doubt of the existence on all sides of the willingness to pursue measures to strengthen the régime for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to halt the ceaseless development of ever more devastating weapons, both nuclear and non-nuclear. Progress was indispensable if the quantitative arms race was not to be replaced by a qualitative one. Concerted action was needed to curb the vertical and horizontal proliferation and further development of nuclear weapons. The deliberations at the Amendment Conference and at the current Meeting for the organization of the Conference could have a special significance and impact on the disarmament process as a whole and efforts towards nuclear disarmament in particular.

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6. In his report on the work of the Organization submitted to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General noted that "significant additional restrictions on nuclear testing beyond the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of 1963, leading progressively to a complete halt, together with major reductions in nuclear weapons, offer the best way to release the world from the fearful possibility of nuclear war". With the current improvement of the international climate, conditions were now more propitious and more promising for initiatives and determined action to build confidence between Member States and move towards nuclear disarmament. In that connection, it was crucial that progress be achieved towards a comprehensive test ban and a strengthening of the non-proliferation régime.

7. Although the problems to be resolved in the negotiation of an amendment to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water were indeed difficult, there was every reason to believe that the States parties would do their utmost to find appropriate and constructive measures to ensure further progress towards the common objective of a complete cessation of nuclear testing.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

8. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT proposed the election of Mr. Edmond Jayasinghe (Sri Lanka) as President of the Meeting. Mr. Jayasinghe's candidature had been proposed and supported by many delegations at the meeting of the States parties that had been held on 11 May.

9. Mr. Jayasinghe was elected President by acclamation.

10. Mr. Jayasinghe (Sri Lanka) took the Chair.

11. The PRESIDENT expressed his gratitude at having been elected to the post of President and for the great honour which had been bestowed upon him. He would do his utmost to ensure the success of the Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water for the Organization of the Amendment Conference.

12. The eventual goal which the international community had set for itself was the conclusion of a treaty on the permanent banning of all nuclear-test explosions in all environments for all time. Such a ban would be an important step towards preventing the qualitative improvement and further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

13. The Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of 1963 had been the first international agreement of world-wide scope in the field of nuclear arms limitation. It had also helped to create a climate that made progress on other agreements in the field of nuclear arms limitation a reality.

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14. However, the international community could hardly be complacent. There was a need to work resolutely towards the removal of the nuclear threat. The positive changes in the international climate were more auspicious than ever before for accomplishing that task. The participants in the Meeting had a great opportunity to begin a process that could restore the vision of a world where there was no testing or production of nuclear weapons and which would ultimately be free of all the terrible weapons of mass destruction.

15. The States parties should bear in mind that the issues which they would be considering were complex and defied simple, facile solutions. In the course of the next two weeks, the Meeting would have to take decisions and submit recommendations on which the success of the Amendment Conference, to be held in January 1991, would depend.

16. He urged all delegations to continue to take the same constructive approach as before and to act in a spirit of co-operation and dedication to the achievement of a common objective, namely, the conclusion of a treaty which would result in the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests.

ELECTION OF TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS

17. The President said that, following prior consultations among States parties, he understood that it had been agreed to elect Mr. Sotirov of Bulgaria and Ms. Courtney of Australia as Vice-Presidents.

18. Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria) and Ms. Courtney (Australia) were elected Vice-Presidents by acclamation.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MEETING

19. The President suggested that Mr. Sohrab Kheradi of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, who had been nominated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in a letter dated 23 April 1990, should be confirmed as Secretary-General of the Meeting.

20. Mr. Sohrab Kheradi was confirmed as Secretary-General of the Meeting by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (PTBT/CONF/M/1)

21. The agenda was adopted.

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (PTBT/CONF/M/2)

22. The President said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the States parties wished to adopt the rules of procedure as contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/2.

23. It was so decided.
PROGRAMME OF WORK (PTBT/CONF/M/5)

24. The programme of work was adopted.

ADOPTION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETING THE COSTS OF THE MEETING AND THE CONFERENCE (PTBT/CONF/M/7)

25. The President drew attention to document PTBT/CONF/M/7 on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting and the Conference, agreement on which had been reached at an informal meeting of States parties held on 25 May 1990. The delegations also had before them papers which identified indicative contributions and suggested levels of voluntary contributions. The voluntary contributions had been calculated in accordance with the formula proposed by the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and Sweden. The figures, pertaining to points 1 to 4 of document PTBT/CONF/M/7 would have to be adjusted to reflect the actual list of States parties and States signatories, which could be done only at the time of the Conference. He hoped that all participating delegations would accept their share of the voluntary contributions in order to meet the full costs of the Meeting and the Conference, and that they would indicate their contributions at the earliest possible date. The proposed financial arrangements would not constitute a precedent.

26. Since the Secretariat would provide assistance and services but would not be in a position to incur financial obligations until the necessary resources were available, it would be necessary to provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the relevant information regarding the financial arrangements.

27. Mr. Duval (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance) said he believed that the announced voluntary contributions would be indicated in the information on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting through indicative contributions, which would be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General. The proposed financial arrangements did not entail any charges to the regular budget and was in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

28. Mr. Jain (India), referring to the agreement on the arrangements for meeting the costs of the Meeting and the Conference, said that voluntary contributions would be made on a voluntary basis and that his delegation would take a decision on its voluntary contributions in accordance with established procedure.

29. Ms. Mason (Canada) said that informal consultations had been held in order to determine whether all delegations had received the proper instructions and were ready to announce voluntary contributions. During those consultations, none of the delegations had declared that it had not received the proper instructions. Since that was the case, her delegation was taking part in the current Meeting in a spirit of goodwill.

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30. Mr. JAIN (India) said that his delegation was prepared to support the adoption of the draft decision contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/7. However, the provisions of the informal agreement could not be adopted as an official decision of the Meeting. India wished to point out that that issue had been the subject of the extensive consultations which had preceded the opening of the current Meeting.

31. Ms. MASON (Canada) agreed that the agreement had been informal and that it should not be given a formal character. Nevertheless, the preceding observation by the representative of India contradicted his position with respect to the informal agreement.

32. The PRESIDENT, noting that at previous consultations there had been no comments on the draft decision adopted on 25 May 1990, said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the participants in the Meeting agreed to adopt the decision contained in document PTBT/CONF/M/7.

33. It was so decided.

34. The PRESIDENT suggested that the list of delegations wishing to take part in the general exchange of views should be closed on 30 May 1990 at 3 p.m.

35. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.