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(Mr. Hacene, Algeria)

There can be no doubt that the process of drafting a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons has entered a crucial phase. The progress achieved at the previous session under Ambassador Cromartie is certainly an encouraging result, as well as a stimulus for the ongoing negotiations. Agreement has still to be reached on significant aspects of the convention, but this should not deter us from our objective of concluding this instrument. A spirit of flexibility and mutual concessions continue to be the best means of overcoming the obstacles to definitive elaboration of a future convention. The proposals made over the past few weeks are, in my delegation's opinion, an example which should be followed if we are to reconcile the various approaches.

Furthermore, we are sure that the competence and experience of the new Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ekéus, will be a great help for making full use of the years of effort invested in the consideration of the various aspects of the draft convention and finding an appropriate solution to the questions which remained outstanding.

The conclusion of an agreement for the complete elimination of chemical weapons would be a milestone in multilateral disarmament efforts. Clearly, such an agreement will be even more significant if it could win the support of all States. To this end, it is essential that the chemical weapons ban should not lead to discriminatory measures or impediments for the chemical industry which, as we are all aware, is of particular importance in the development processes of our countries.

(Mr. Hacene, Algeria)

Following the same trend of thought, we think that the future convention would be all the stronger if it promoted international co-operation in the chemical industry, and here we must focus on the importance, in our view, of article 11 of the draft convention.