

(Mr. Semichi, Algeria)

... With respect to the convention on chemical weapons, I would like to reiterate here the validity of the reservations and apprehensions expressed by 14 developing countries in document CD/CW/WP.427. We regret that some of them were not taken into account in the final draft of the convention. We consider it to be regrettable that, on the pretext that 1992 was the last chance to finalize the convention, solutions were adopted in several places which will inevitably prove inadequate in application. Hence we are afraid that in future they may be sources of misunderstandings or disputes. However, I would remind you that my country finds the draft convention as presented in document CD/CW/WP.400/Rev.2 of sufficient interest and merit to agree to its being transmitted to the United Nations General Assembly for adoption. We cannot fail in our duty to pay a deserved tribute at this stage in our work to Ambassador von Wagner, whose personal qualities as well as his efforts and those of his delegation led to the compromise that was reached. We also thank the Australian delegation, which, both through the Secretary of State Gareth Evans and through Ambassador O'Sullivan, spared no effort to facilitate the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, especially when they submitted to us at a particularly appropriate time an outline treaty which is the origin of all the progress achieved in the preparation of the final draft convention. It would not be right to refer to the chemical weapons convention without mentioning the remarkable contributions made by the secretariat of the Ad Hoc Committee. Here I would like to pay a special tribute to the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Mr. Abdelkadir Bensmail. It is important to pay this tribute not only because he is an Algerian but above all and particularly as the Secretary of the Committee on Chemical Weapons. In the view of very many delegations, his name will henceforth be inseparable from this historic achievement of the Conference on Disarmament. His experience and his diplomatic talents and constant availability, his own and that of all his colleagues in the Committee, have been placed at the service of the Committee for a whole decade, and I am convinced that all the presiding officers who have occupied your chair have noted Mr. Bensmail's readiness to help and his contribution to the work of our Conference.