

(Mr. Labrador Rubio, Venezuela)

Since there already exists the fairly immediate possibility of an agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons, the Committee ought to endeavour at once to initiate work on the refining of the basic elements of such an agreement. Objective criteria should be used to elucidate ambiguous concepts which are hampering the negotiations and thus to reach a clear definition of the ideas of "permitted uses", "defensive purposes" (which seem difficult to accept except in the form of the neutralization of the toxic effects of chemical agents) and "precursors" and "key precursors", and agreement should be reached, through negotiation, on the machinery for the declaration and destruction of existing stocks of chemical weapons and the verification thereof.

(Mr. Berhane Deressa, Ethiopia)

As the representative of Ethiopia, a country which was one of the first victims of aggression through the indiscriminate use of chemical weapons against its defenceless population, some 50 years ago, it is with a sense of great anguish that I refer to the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons that have continued unabated despite our best efforts within the United Nations. We therefore place high hopes on the early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. In this connection, even though intensive work has been done during the present session of this Committee, some important differences continue to impede the attainment of our common objective. We must collectively strive to remove these difficulties with a view to achieving the long-awaited conclusion of a treaty banning chemical weapons.