

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

The United States welcomes the very constructive proposal by the United Kingdom for "ad hoc inspections", as outlined in document CD/909. This proposal, and the significant proposal for "ad hoc checks" presented by the Federal Republic of Germany in document CD/869, have opened up important possibilities for strengthening the verification of non-production. While the two approaches are somewhat different, both have strong points that could be incorporated in an eventual provision for ad hoc verification. We hope that such a provision can be developed relatively soon.

Let me turn now to the question of challenge inspection. From the beginning of the negotiations, challenge inspection has been recognized as one of the key issues. The United States proposal in April 1984 for mandatory, short-notice challenge inspections represented a turning-point in the negotiations. Another turning-point was reached three years later in August 1987, when Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze announced to the Conference that his country also supported challenge inspection without the right of refusal. For almost two years now, the United States and the Soviet Union have had a common approach to challenge inspection. Yet during that time there has been no concerted effort to complete this key provision. Delegations which have serious concerns have remained largely silent. This has left a gaping hole in the most important area of any convention, the verification régime.

We are heartened, however, by the positive developments. The initiation of trial inspections represents a major contribution to the negotiations. In this connection, we welcome the ambitious efforts by the United Kingdom as reported in document CD/921, as well as the announcement that the Soviet Union has carried out a trial challenge inspection. It is our hope that these efforts will help to resolve concerns about the intrusiveness of challenge inspections. Furthermore, we are encouraged by the plans to hold consultations on challenge inspection this summer. We urge delegations to participate actively and to make their views clear. In this connection I want to emphasize that ad hoc verification and challenge inspection are complementary. Both are normal and necessary types of verification and each has a separate and distinct role to play. Neither can take the place of the other. Both types of verification should be discussed in parallel in the Conference.

With regard to the question of protection of confidential information, in our view, a convention must contain detailed safeguards for sensitive information. This topic was discussed at length during the spring and is expected to receive attention during the summer as well. As a result of the spring discussions there now appears to be general recognition that the need to protect information applies not only to commercial secrets, but also to sensitive military information, such as security arrangements for CW storage sites and technical information on CW production facilities. We believe that a special annex on confidentiality is warranted. The Chairman's working paper resulting from discussions in the spring provides an excellent basis for further work. A certain amount of refinement and strengthening is necessary, however. It is important that the planned annex provide a clear and simple framework for the detailed regulations of the Technical Secretariat that will