

(Mr. Kornienko, USSR)

Now let me address chemical weapons -- that formidable instrument of mass destruction which actually exists. The Soviet Union has always been an ardent proponent of the idea that chemistry should be used exclusively for the benefit of people and never to their detriment. We believe that the most dependable way to achieve that goal is, as before, a total ban on chemical weapons as such and not merely on their use.

The USSR, both on its own and together with other socialist countries, has repeatedly made specific proposals on this subject. It is not through the fault of the Soviet Union that the solution of the problem has been unacceptably delayed.

As was pointed out in M.S. Gorbachev's Statement of 15 January, the Soviet Union regards as entirely feasible the task of completely eliminating chemical as well as nuclear weapons even in this century. He has proposed to intensify the talks within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament to work out and conclude an effective and verifiable convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of the existing stockpiles of those weapons.

It should be said that the Soviet Union favours the earliest possible elimination of the existing stockpiles of chemical weapons as well as of the industrial base for their production.

Accordingly, our position envisages the timely declaration of the locations of enterprises producing chemical weapons and the timely cessation of their production. We are in favour of starting to work out procedures for destroying the relevant industrial base and for proceeding to eliminate stockpiles of chemical weapons soon after the convention enters into force.

Again, it should be emphasized that all these measures would be carried out under strict control including international on-site inspections. Here, as in other cases, the Soviet Union is no less interested in such control than other States.

While proposing that weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and chemical, should be removed from the arsenals of States and that the emergence of space arms should be prevented, the Soviet Union considers that measures to limit and reduce conventional armed forces and armaments should be carried out in parallel to this process.