

Mr. RAHARDJO (Indonesia):

My association with the Conference on Disarmament is at a time when the echo of the ongoing dynamic and fundamental changes in the global political climate seems to be having an effect on its work. The observations made on the progress of the negotiations on item 4 have made it clear to us all that tangible results could be realized in the near future, due to the conciliatory positions of the major parties, which will eventually pave the way for the speedy conclusion of the draft convention.

It is my delegation's view that a decision made by the major possessors of chemical weapons to abandon these weapons options and to totally eliminate them from their military arsenals would encourage others to do the same. Recent events in the Gulf have clearly demonstrated that the military value of these weapons is limited when in contest with other systems of sophisticated weaponry owned by a handful of the collective military Powers. The political costs of maintaining these abhorrent weapons for defence and military purposes in the future will be too high for any country to afford.

The change of position of the Government of the United States on the question of the use of chemical weapons has provided new impetus to the course of negotiations in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The new approach of the Governments of the United States and the USSR to the question of universal adherence has brought about a fresh resolve and has resulted in the emergence of a common will to achieve a final agreement as soon as possible on the establishment of a treaty on the total prohibition of these abhorrent weapons. My delegation welcomes this development and hopes that the future convention on chemical weapons will be a faithful reflection of the legitimate interests of the international community as a whole.

For a country like Indonesia, which has never possessed or developed such abhorrent weapons, the total prohibition of their use has always been regarded as a crucial element in the convention. We believe that the real danger of

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