

(Mr. Montassier, France)

The regional approach as a way of selecting the candidates for the Executive Council is certainly not to be ruled out. The desire for effectiveness also suggests that, whether a regional or some other criterion is adopted, the States whose technological, financial and military potential make them essential partners in the sphere of a chemical weapons convention should be permanent members. Thirdly, the possibility of access to the Council for all States Parties to the convention by means of election should obviously be recognized.

Consequently, to combine these various criteria it cannot be ruled out that the membership of the Executive Council must be raised to 20, perhaps 25, but certainly no more.

I shall not dwell at any greater length today on the details of the problems raised by the draft convention on chemical weapons. In a later statement my delegation will deal with all the problems raised by verification, whether of stocks, production facilities or the use of chemical weapons. It will also put forward its views on the institutional machinery of verification. These are controversial and thorny problems which show us how great the task before us would be even if it were merely a question of settling those questions alone.

Unfortunately, many other controversial issues remain outstanding. These considerations, which cannot be disputed, lead us to make a dual appeal: for the acceleration of the negotiations and the prolongation of our work. Of course, these two appeals are linked: there would be no point in meeting if it were to do nothing. However, with prospects of progress, it might be considered that at an appropriate period, in October-November, the discussions could be pursued in Geneva, and our work at the beginning of the winter session might be brought forward, although this is a matter for discussion. My delegation would support such proposals, while remaining open to other suggestions, as we are all well aware here that every solution has its drawbacks.

In any event, at the end of this session, which has brought us some moments of hope as well as the usual series of disappointments, we must more than ever call upon that contradictory virtue to which we owe our best progress, namely, reasonable impatience.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

My delegation is not happy with the work done at this year's session towards negotiating a convention banning chemical weapons. We had earlier welcomed the statement made by the distinguished representative of the USSR in February this year which showed forward movement on the question of verification. My delegation had also expressed the hope that the United States draft of a chemical weapons convention would provide added impetus to our work on the subject. I must regretfully note that this has not been the case. The work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has reached a stage where we can well do without polemics. It is most important that the delegations cease to view the issues involved in an East-West context. The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has been fortunate in having a Chairman of the calibre of Ambassador Ekeus, but the extent of success that a Chairman can achieve depends in very considerable measure on the co-operation that he receives from other delegations.