

(Mr. Calderón, Peru)

The prohibition of chemical weapons has now become the major issue before the Conference on Disarmament, given the continuing possibility of arriving at a comprehensive treaty on the subject in the near future. It is true that progress has not been spectacular, but the important thing is that there is a determination to negotiate. Furthermore, we have observed a commendable effort to find imaginative solutions to unusual problems, with a particularly constructive contribution from the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Rolf Ekéus, who, with dedication, sound judgement and skill, has set an appropriate pace for our work and maintained a high level of enthusiasm.

However, there are a variety of outstanding issues which undoubtedly require a great deal of work. We are thinking first and foremost of on-site challenge inspections, the question of jurisdiction and control, verification

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of destruction and procedures to carry out such destruction, and the use of chemical facilities and products for peaceful purposes, including the strengthening of international co-operation. Furthermore, there is a problem which, even though it is not an urgent one, is none the less relevant to this forum. We are referring specifically to the procedure that will have to be followed once the Ad hoc Committee has successfully completed its work. The disagreeable recollection of the last multilateral instrument negotiated by the Conference on Disarmament leads us to proceed cautiously in this regard. As we are aware, the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques was opened for signature by States in 1976, despite the fact that there was no consensus in this negotiating forum regarding the scope of the obligations stipulated in article I. The same must not happen in the case of chemical weapons, and we are duty-bound to prevent this from occurring.

Within that context, it would appear desirable to envisage the establishment of a new body open to all members of the international community, whose task would be to give an official stamp to the work of the 40 States which make up the Conference on Disarmament. In a complementary manner, this would make it possible to define more clearly the process of transition that will necessarily take place between the adoption of the new convention, its signing and its entry into force. This would prevent unforeseen situations from arising in the interim period, and would rule out arbitrary procedures that could undermine all the efforts of nearly two decades.