

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

Another pending issue is that of settlement of disputes. There is no provision in the "rolling text" at present on this subject. Certain references, however, exist, though scattered among some articles which specify one method, namely negotiations. What happens, for example, if a solution is not reached through negotiation? All such measures and methods of dispute settlement should be incorporated in the text. Provisions dealing with settlement of disputes should be assembled under a single article, and it should be expected that certain disputes may arise out of the application or the interpretation of the convention. We must, therefore, provide adequate means for the resolution of such disputes. It is reassuring that the Ad Hoc Committee has embarked on the consideration of this subject. A new and comprehensive article on this subject in the "rolling text" will no doubt be a stimulus for further work.

The chemical weapons convention is a functional agreement. Thus the organizational aspects of the convention acquire great relevance. The executive council will be the principal political organ of the organization to be established for the purpose of implementing the convention. The composition of the executive council and its decision-making mechanism should be determined on the basis of the functional requirements - that is to say rapidity in convening meetings and the ability to take timely decisions. A flexible non-discriminatory appointment regime should be adopted to safeguard the right of every State to serve on the council without any special rights or discrimination. The functions of the executive council are just as important. The council should be expected to supervise all the activities emanating from the convention. It should consider the questions of non-compliance and convey its conclusions and recommendations to the Security Council, as I have already stated.

I now turn to the question of verification. The credibility of the verification regime to be established by the convention will be one of the major factors governing its life course. A watertight verification regime is imperative in order to allow the convention to pursue its objectives. The draft convention envisages a number of verification measures. What is revolutionary about this convention is the idea that States parties to the convention are asked to accept, beforehand, the fact that the organization, through its appropriate organs, could at any time inspect any site on their respective territories. This innovation is a bold challenge to the concept of sovereignty. If such provisions are to be enshrined in the chemical weapons convention, as we all hope, they will open a new phase in international relations built on total transparency in all disarmament agreements.

The Ad Hoc Committee has been active on the issue of challenge inspections during the past few weeks. There are several proposals on this question, the most recent of which is the proposal presented by four States and contained in document CD/CW/WP.352. The purpose of any provision on challenge inspection should be to clarify and resolve questions of compliance with the convention. Requests for inspections must only be within the scope of the convention, which is the total prohibition of chemical weapons.