

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

For some delegations the most difficult issue of all in our text may be the proposed composition of the executive council which we have outlined at annex 5 of our draft. As you will all see, we have devised a formula for the composition of the council which, again, seeks a balance - this time between the geopolitical criterion and the so-called "industrial criterion". I might note in passing here that we could have advanced formulas which better sought to protect an Australian national interest in this part of the convention. But that was not the purpose of our draft: we were seeking, here as everywhere else, a balanced compromise with which everyone could live.

I have to say, none the less, that this has been the most difficult area of all in which to predict the final shape of a workable compromise. This is really an area which is likely to require political resolution as one of the last acts of the end-game of negotiations. So I appeal to you not to be too focused on this part of the text. Though we believe our formula has merit, it is included more than anything for the sake of completeness - to assist in our overall purpose of producing a model of what a final text will look like. Our first task should be to look at the other compromises and balances we have struck. If we can speedily agree on all of the rest of the final text, reaching agreement on the executive council should not be an insuperable obstacle.

Before the CWC negotiations are over, there are at least two other potential obstacles that I think will need to be addressed squarely. One is the fear of the cost of a new international organization, particularly for small, developing countries which have only fledgling chemical industries and whose main concern is to have unimpeded access to imported chemicals, especially fertilizers and other basic chemical products. We believe that a financial formula based on the scale of assessed contributions to the United Nations is the only credible way that an organization can be established. Our calculations suggest that the verification regime we are advocating will imply an inspection burden for the secretariat of about the same dimensions as that undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Australia recognizes that we have special, additional, responsibilities in our own region. At the November 1990 Regional Seminar on the chemical weapons convention which was held in Brisbane, I made clear to participants from the Asia-Pacific region that Australia would provide assistance with the implementation of this convention and with further assistance as necessary for them to have it operate effectively. We have already commenced this process with a workshop for technical experts. By this undertaking I hope that States in our region will understand that they need not fear what might appear to be daunting obligations by way of declarations and the collection of other required data which they would have to undertake to provide. We will discuss with them during the period that the preparatory commission is operating what Australia could do to assist them by way of technical and legal advice, preparation of relevant material and other practical implementation measures. We do hope that other nations with significant commitments in the chemical industry and to the chemical weapons convention will undertake to do likewise in their own regions.