

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

proliferation. The evidence produced by the United Nations on the increased use of poison gas in the latter stages of the Gulf war imparts a new sense of urgency to the matter. This should harden the resolve of the member States of the Conference on Disarmament to do all they can to ensure the earliest possible completion of the years-long negotiations. Maybe those who argue that if the ban is not enforced soon "the chemical cat will be out of the bag" are right.

Has the favourable political atmosphere one may ask, been translated into concrete results in the negotiations? It is hardly possible to give a simple answer to this question, since ups and downs have continued to characterize the pace of the Conference's negotiations. First and foremost, we would like to note that the Chairman of the ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Sujka of Poland, has made and is making great efforts to speed up the pace of the negotiations. In this respect he has been energetically supported by the chairmen of the working groups, Comrade Cima (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Macedo (Mexico) and Mr. Numata (Japan). We are very grateful to Ambassador Sujka and the three chairmen of the working groups for their dedication and contributions.

Among the unresolved problems in the negotiations, the issue of the non-production of chemical weapons in civil chemical industry looms large. The goal of the negotiations is clear - to establish a régime which, on the one hand, would guarantee the non-production of chemical weapons in civil chemical industry and, on the other, would not be an obstacle to the development and production of chemical products for peaceful purposes. The achievement of this goal, however, is a complex and difficult task. This is so because there is a need to elaborate and agree upon provisions which take into account different but justified requirements, first, to treat two types of property - State and private - on an equal footing; second, to take into account the special features of production not only in large industrial complexes, but also in medium-sized and small enterprises; third, to establish a verification régime that is both effective and financially reasonable; and fourth, to guarantee the confidentiality of information. The complexity of the task precludes by definition any maximalism and requires a great deal of effort to find a common denominator to achieve a solution which would inspire confidence in both the viability and the effectiveness of the convention.

My delegation supports all steps aimed at accelerating the settlement of problems related to the elaboration of article VI. In our opinion the meetings with representatives of civil chemical industry were a useful initiative. It is in the interest of the negotiations that such meetings should continue during the spring and summer parts of the Conference's session in 1989.

My delegation welcomes the Soviet proposal for holding an international experiment in civil chemical industry. We hope that this experiment will make a useful contribution to the elaboration of the verification régime's provisions for the non-production of chemical weapons in civil chemical industry. We would like to note with satisfaction that the preparations for the experiment have entered a practical phase.