

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

As we have previously stated in this forum, as part of this Regional Initiative, Australia has hosted two seminars, one in Canberra in August 1989 and one in Brisbane in November 1990.

I spoke to this Conference on 14 February 1991 and said that Australia intended to host a workshop for regional chemists later in 1991, with the aim of providing the necessary background to those technical advisers in governments in the region who may be required to assist in the national implementation of the future Convention.

It is my pleasure to report that this workshop was held, as planned, last August, at the Materials Research Laboratory with 19 participants from 16 countries in our region. In addition to the presentations and discussions on the scientific and technical aspects of the CWC, the participants observed the conduct of a Trial Inspection of a chemical plant site that may be defined as either Schedule 3 or "CW-Capable" under the future Convention. A Trial Inspection report is being issued by the Secretariat as document CD/1128, and will appear as Working Paper CD/CW/WP.385. I hope that this Working Paper will assist in the future work of this Conference and the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, in particular, the Working Group on Verification.

Mr. President, while discussing the subject of implementation of the future Convention, a number of delegates at this morning's meeting may recall that at the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held in Canberra in September 1989, the Australian Foreign Minister announced that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was proceeding to establish a National Secretariat to act as a nucleus for the future National Authority of the CWC. The Minister stated that that secretariat, in consultation with appropriate Federal and State Government departments, would be responsible for reviewing existing laws and regulations covering the activities of the Australian chemical industry, and looking for ways to introduce and adapt the prospective requirements of the CWC to our current regulatory matrix.

The first task of the National Secretariat was to develop a strategy to prepare Australia for national implementation of the Convention. The strategy comprises a programme of consultation and research leading to the development of a package of implementation measures which will be considered by the Australian Government at the appropriate time. A document entitled "Strategy for Preparing for the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Australia" was presented to the Conference on Disarmament in February 1991 as document CD/1055. That paper served to illustrate the fact that there is a wide range of tasks which should be initiated in good time by all governments to allow arrangements to be put in place for a smooth transfer from signature of the Convention to its ratification.

An important requirement under the future Convention, highlighted in the Strategy Paper, is the assembling of data on which chemicals are produced, used, and traded. When considering its approach to implementation, Australia's National Secretariat was faced with the problem of not knowing the levels of production or use of the relevant chemicals in Australia. This is a