

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

With that, Mr. President, I have concluded the submission of the report but permit me now, as the representative of Sweden, to make some reflections on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

I would like to point out and underline three important results of the work during this session.

First, a method for multilateral negotiations has been developed, with a view to arriving at a full text of a convention. As this is the first time since its establishment that the Committee has been entrusted with a negotiating mandate, it is obvious that the methods now developed could be refined. The approach so far has been to start by using available basic material from the work during earlier years (CD/CW/WP.67) which to a varying degree has been transformed, through elaborations in the Working Groups, into treaty language. The Committee Chairman has thereafter reworked that material into compromise proposals, which have been consulted upon and then subject to drafting. The result of this process is preliminary drafted treaty texts, containing alternative language.

This process facilitates an overview of the development of the negotiations on different elements of the convention and makes possible a reasonable co-ordination of the process. In this context I wish to stress that the preliminary structure will be a useful tool for the organization of the future negotiations and the text of the convention.

Second, there is an undisputable tendency towards convergence of views on several or most areas of substance in the Committee work. However, differences on a few issues have arisen. Nevertheless, the work during the year must be summed up as steady but slow progress. The report speaks for itself in this respect. It must be kept in mind that the substantive material, in the process of being transformed from descriptive language into treaty language, has been quite thoroughly penetrated and now is better prepared and ripe for decision and instructions from the capitals.

I consider it a large step forward that the definition of chemical weapons is now essentially worked out. This will facilitate the further development and solutions of outstanding issues. It should therefore be possible to considerably speed up work during the 1985 session.

The serious tension between the two major Powers has made itself felt in the Committee, especially during its final week. It is therefore very important and satisfactory that it was possible, literally within minutes of the conclusion of the work, to adopt a substantive report.

Third, there is a consensus in the Committee that more time should from now on be devoted to the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention. A definite decision has not been taken yet as to exactly how this agreement in principle should be transformed into a detailed work plan. The recommendations adopted by the Committee should however be enough for delegations to plan their resources to this effect in a preliminary manner.

If the Conference approves the recommendations of the Committee, a first modest step will be taken with the planned meeting of the Committee for three weeks in January. This is a short time, and therefore it is necessary that the meeting should be well prepared. To this end the Committee has recommended that I undertake consultations. It is certainly my intention to do so and I hope that delegations will be prepared to fully participate in such consultations.