

(Mr. Genscher, Federal Republic of Germany)

to establish a fully functional organization which can reliably monitor the comprehensive implementation of the ban on chemical weapons. We consider the financial questions arising in this connection to be solvable.

Apart from progress in the subject-matter itself, it is pleasing to note that there have been accompanying confidence-building measures which have had a positive impact on the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Following the initial steps by the West, i.e. the United States declaration of details of its chemical weapon stocks in the summer of 1986, the Soviet Union presented to the members of this Conference examples of Soviet chemical weapons at its chemical weapons facility in Shikhany in October 1987. A Soviet delegation was able to inspect the chemical weapon destruction facility at Tooele in the United States. As early as 1984, we demonstrated to Soviet experts our facility in Munster for destroying any old stocks of chemical weapons discovered.

It is also encouraging to note that the United States is willing to exchange data on existing quantities with the Soviet Union even before the completion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention. In December 1987, the Soviet Union declared that the stocks of chemical weapons on its territory do not exceed 50,000 tons of warfare agents. This step should be welcomed. However, this again gives rise to the need to clarify the large discrepancies between Western estimates and Soviet figures. The verifiable disclosure of data would therefore be another step towards dispelling distrust. It could simultaneously counter the fear expressed with regard to maintaining security on account of the different sizes of the chemical weapons stocks existing at the start of the 10-year destruction phase. In order to take account of the disparities in the chemical weapon arsenals of participating States, those countries with the largest stocks could first destroy some of their chemical weapons until an agreed level is reached. Only then would linear destruction by all countries possessing chemical weapons be commenced. At the same time as the Convention comes into effect, a ban on production that is subject to verification procedures would come into force. Energetic efforts should now be made to advance the negotiations so that a convention on the global, comprehensive and dependably verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons is reached as quickly as possible.

The political momentum in the negotiations must be maintained in order that the basic consensus of the Geneva Disarmament Conference is not called into question.