(Mr. von Stülpnagel, Federal Republic of Germany)

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As regards the abolition of chemical weapons, my delegation has spoken on this subject on various occasions of late and expressed its satisfaction at the visible advances being made in individual sectors. In its view, the negotiations have acquired a momentum which not only reflects the deep concern universally felt about this scourge facing mankind, but also increasingly testifies to the political obligation to prevent further instrumentalization of this category of weapons. These negotiations simultaneously benefit from

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new expectations and proposals in other areas of arms control, for example in respect of verification problems. The growing momentum of the negotiations in elaborating language must now be fully exploited so as to conclude as early as possible a chemical weapons convention -- a subject to which my Government accords the highest priority.

My delegation's concentration on the main elements of the convention is meant to be a practical contribution. All delegations know the dilemma between the necessary political oversight and decision on one side, and the unavoidable scrutiny of the small print on the other. We must be guided by the principle that the underlying uniform commitments for all countries must first be dealt with politically and then be formulated in no vague terms. For example, only by an adequate verification régime can all countries be convinced that a convention banning chemical weapons worldwide is the most reliable guarantee that they will not be used. Such verification must be both effective and practicable. Striking the necessary balance is a major task for this Conference. We feel that on the central political issue of a chemical weapons convention, that of on-challenge inspections, this balance has been achieved satisfactorily in the British proposal in Working Paper CD/715. We therefore continue to strongly support this proposal.