

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

In the negotiations held last year in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, some progress was made in defining and listing relevant chemicals, and in continuing the elaboration of some parts of the convention. Useful work was undertaken on identifying chemical-weapon production facilities as well as on measures for their elimination. However, on many

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issues substantive efforts will be needed in order to arrive at acceptable solutions. These include elaboration of the principles for the elimination of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, and the régime for precluding the possibility of the production of new types of chemical weapons by the chemical industry. A very important question which necessitates further examination concerns the elaboration of principles, procedures and organization in connection with strict compliance with the provisions of the Convention. We believe that the Ad Hoc Committee will make further progress in drafting the convention this year as well. We are encouraged by the decision of the United States and the Soviet Union to accelerate their bilateral negotiations on chemical weapons. However, we consider that the chemical-weapons negotiations pursued in the Conference should be completed at an early date, keeping in mind the road travelled so far and the results achieved in these negotiations. Yugoslavia, for its part, will continue to make its contribution towards that end.

In our opinion, the most effective way of averting the threat of chemical weapons is by their comprehensive ban within the framework of the convention which is currently being negotiated in the Conference. The initiatives which are geographically limited, like the creation of chemical-weapon-free zones in some regions, can be useful as confidence-building measures, but cannot replace a comprehensive ban. As a signatory of the 1925 Protocol, Yugoslavia has always been willing to consult with all interested parties on how best to contribute to a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons.