

I suggest that the Conference on Disarmament proceed now directly to establish a fully operational global seismic network -- possibly supplemented with atmospheric fallout samplers and other technologies. This network would monitor all nuclear explosions, wherever they occur, and explore the capabilities of such a network to monitor a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

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I referred earlier to the questions relating to definitions. As regards herbicides my delegation agrees that this question could best be handled outside the definitions in view of the conceptual and practical problems, including verification problems, it entails. This should not, however, belittle the need for the future convention to take cognizance of the concerns expressed. Coming from a tropical developing country where the natural cover and ecology is an important element of our agro-based economy, we share the concerns about the hostile use of herbicides. We therefore believe that the absence of an undertaking against such use will be a lacuna in the convention. There is an important need to define permitted purposes and activities in such a manner that no loopholes are left, while recognizing that loopholes will always be found where the political will to honour a treaty is absent.

There is agreement that one of the most important elements, if not the most important of the convention, is the elimination of existing stockpiles and facilities. The negotiations in Working Group B showed that there is also agreement that elimination of stocks should be undertaken according to an agreed schedule which takes into account the security interests of all States. We also would like to be optimistic about the emerging consensus on on-site monitoring of destruction or diversion of stocks. These areas of agreement however cannot mask the differences that remain. The issues relating to the timing of declarations and locations of stocks should be addressed in a realistic way in accordance with the principles already agreed upon such as the principle of having an agreed schedule or time-frame for elimination of stocks. It is regrettable therefore that more thought could not be given to the possibilities of finding realistic solutions to these outstanding problems without indulging in circular discussions of arguing for and against well-known positions. Whilst noting the constructive trend of emerging understanding on the question of verifiable diversion of components of existing stocks, my delegation regrets the lack of similar understanding on the need to have as comprehensive information as possible with regard to the plans for destruction. It would be important for the States parties who do not possess chemical weapons as well, to know that chemical warfare capability is reduced and eliminated without prejudice to the security of any State party. This would promote the stability of and wider adherence to the convention. It is to be hoped that an acceptable compromise could be found on the basis of the suggestion for the redeployment of stocks before declaration. We welcome the willingness displayed to share expertise over the destruction of chemical weapons. Document CD/518 of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany and the kind invitation of the Government of Switzerland to the Conference on Disarmament to visit the facility in Spiez are examples of this. So also are the statements of the representative of Finland on 19 June and the representative of Norway on 26 June.

Much has been said about verification. It has been accepted by all that absolute verification is a chimera. Let us therefore save our energy by not chasing after it. There is no doubt that a convention as complex as the one being negotiated now should necessarily have a carefully worked out verification procedure to promote confidence of States. The technological capacity to verify a chemical-weapons ban is not in doubt so long as the political will to comply with the ban and mutual confidence exists. My