

(Mr. Fan Guoxiang, People's Republic of China)

The prohibition of chemical weapons has all along been an item of greater promise for progress in the Conference. Trends more positive than before have emerged in the negotiations on the Convention this year. The positive and business-like discussions and consultations among delegations have brought about progress on certain issues. For instance, on List C intended for chemicals with wide civilian uses which can at the same time be used for chemical weapon purposes, there is basically a consensus on most of the chemicals to be included in the list and their régime. Preliminary discussions have been held on the contents of List A containing chemicals for key precursors of chemical warfare agents which can at the same time be used for peaceful purposes, and a considerable degree of agreement has been reached on the scope and extent of the data-reporting system. A common understanding has largely been achieved on the need for taking action without warning or unpredictability in routine inspections of the relevant production facilities. There has also been some progress on the issue of the destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities. Useful attempts have been made to narrow the differences on challenge inspection, which has long been a subject of deep controversy. In this connection, the working papers put forward by Pakistan, the United Kingdom and Japan merit our attention.

These achievements are inseparable from the efforts of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Cromartie, and the Chairmen of the three working groups, whose devotion and diligence have contributed to the progress in negotiations. Here I wish to mention the useful role of the workshop on verification sponsored in early June by the Netherlands Government in promoting the negotiations in this field.

While giving due credit to these achievements, we should not overlook the fact that a large amount of work still needs to be done in negotiating a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, in view of the differences on verification, particularly challenge inspection, and on certain other issues that are yet to be solved. We welcome the willingness expressed by the

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two States with the largest chemical arsenals to expedite the negotiations on chemical weapons and hope that they will substantiate their intention with action.