

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiasco, Italy)

of major change and movement on the international scene, the regional dimension may be seen as a more and more independent variable as compared to the bipolar order, where security perceptions at the national level may influence analyses and cause security requirements to be overestimated.

Italy is ready to accede to the convention immediately when the time comes, within the desirable context of co-ordinated accession by a number of countries. Italy is also willing, through the strong relations of co-operation which it maintains with the countries of its own region, to continue exchanges of view on the problem of universality with all the countries sharing its concerns and interests.

In a Europe which is no longer squeezed between walls and curtains, a process is emerging which - as the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs said in Vienna - could bring about the rediscovery of a civilization where we are ultimately "enemyless". The conclusion of our negotiations on chemical weapons would not only produce the most ambitious result ever achieved within a multilateral disarmament system, but could also become a driving element for subsequent achievements, perhaps within the context of an updated role for the Conference on Disarmament. We have to seize the momentum, as our English-speaking friends say, borrowing from Latin the idea of a period of time which is never complete - and certain events in the last few days are here to remind us of this truth. In the final analysis, these are encouraging signs which must be consolidated. But hope cannot be the monopoly of one continent or of a few countries, however important they may be. This is why we greatly appreciate the efforts which are being made towards the strengthening of all aspects of the future convention, even if it is not always easy for us fully to understand the need, at this stage, to get bogged down in prolonged debates on aspects which are essentially technical or of a drafting nature, or in conceptual disputes which run the risk of turning us away from what is essential. On technical aspects, in particular, we too are convinced that they could usefully be entrusted to a specific mechanism of the type proposed by the Australian delegation on behalf of the Western group: its very *raison d'être* is to speed up the pace of the negotiations. Likewise, we are in a position to confirm our full agreement on sending certain problems to the Preparatory Commission, or to a phase following the finalization of the convention, in the framework of the decision-making powers of the future organization.

The complexity of the problems of substance which still await solution should certainly not be underestimated; we have them all well in mind. Nevertheless we believe that it is possible to tackle the substance directly, under an overall approach which goes beyond excessive attention to specifics, without invoking an insufficient level of readiness or the need for a prior solution to other related technical aspects. Consequently, we appreciated the initiative taken by the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Hyltenius, designed to encourage a parallel and more general process of reflection, which, by freeing us from the grip of routine and our set roles, will force us to show our full hands.

Lastly, I would like to express Italy's appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the American and Soviet delegations. We are counting on them, and we are awaiting further progress, which could also contribute to the