

(Mr. Genscher, Germany)

Confidence will also be generated by the destruction of the existing arsenals of chemical weapons, which have long been a burden even to their owners.

I welcome President Yeltsin's statement that Russia has taken over responsibility for the destruction of all of the formerly Soviet stockpiles of chemical weapons. Special importance attaches to the timely destruction of those stockpiles. Russia needs help in dealing with problems arising in connection with the storage, security and destruction of those weapons. Germany is ready to help but others must also do so.

The banning of weapons of mass destruction must also include biological weapons. We welcome the results of the Third Review Conference, in September 1991, of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention. It is a further contribution to the development of the system of confidence-building measures. That convention should be equipped with a verification system.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has given a new dimension to the already existing peril of the spread of know-how concerning the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction. On this I submitted proposals to Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. Those ideas were taken up and reaffirmed in the Final Declaration of the Security Council Summit of 31 January. Along with United States Secretary of State Baker and Russian Foreign Minister Kosyrev, I called for the establishment of an international science and technology centre in Russia. Scientists previously employed in research and development on weapons of mass destruction are to be given civilian jobs in their own country. The idea is to minimize any temptation to engage in activities that would lead to the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as of delivery technologies. Through projects in their own country these scientists and engineers are to participate in the reduction and elimination of weapons of mass destruction and to contribute to greater safety in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This initiative is in many respects an important contribution to conversion. To be successful, the initiative will require considerable international support. It already has the backing of the European Community.

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