

(Mr. Field, United States)

On no issue have I spent more time during this year and the preceding two than on the vital and urgent task of banning forever chemical weapons.

Over these three years, under the able leadership of Ambassadors Sujka, MacPhail and Ekéus, a certain amount of progress has been made in defining the issues and possible approaches to them and producing a clear record of the areas of agreement and disagreement. This year, Ambassador Ekéus has led the work into an important new phase, that of preliminary drafting of provisions for a future convention. My delegation welcomes and strongly supports this development.

I regret that the work on the chemical weapons convention has not made the progress that many of us had expected. The United States has invested a great deal of effort over the past two years -- the detailed views presented in early 1983, the verification workshop held in Tooele, Utah, in late 1983, and culminating in the draft convention tabled by Vice-President Bush in April 1984 -- and we had high hopes that these efforts would stimulate progress, but, unfortunately, such has not been the case. This is certainly no reflection on the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and its working groups. They have laboured long and hard. My delegation is happy and proud to have been associated with them in this effort.

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Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany):

On 19 July, I tried to evaluate the progress in our negotiations on a ban on chemical weapons and arrived at a moderately positive assessment. Indeed, the report of the Conference's Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, as now successfully agreed and about to be formally adopted, provides the negotiators with a comprehensive reference document, largely in treaty language, that constitutes an unprecedented qualitative improvement. For the first time, the final annual work product of our negotiating process is fully structured -- sub-divided in preambular paragraphs and articles of the future convention -- and contains, where differences still subsist, juxtaposed versions of various articles in formulated legal language. That document will become a precious tool in our preparations for the next annual round. All delegations should seize the necessity at this juncture to put aside parochial perspectives of their own, even where it means deviating from working