

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

detailed perfection in the search for ideal solutions to extremely complex problems. The ban is bound to bear some kind of imperfection or other at the outset and will have to be submitted to a constant fine-tuning on the basis of subsequent implementation and experience: there should be no doubt that the same political will and sense of commitment that will allow the finalization of the convention should enable parties to co-operate to ensure full compliance.

Verification issues are clearly central to an effective ban and on many aspects they still present us with unsolved complexities. However, we are convinced that the definition of a reliable verification system along the lines identified through our work is not only possible, but even within reach, given the political will to overcome the remaining obstacles and a sufficient spirit of compromise. We are encouraged by the results of the trial inspections that have been carried out by various countries in the last few months, which, in our opinion, should contribute to a conclusive turn towards the solution of verification problems. Challenge inspections, in our view, will remain the essential element of a verification régime which is capable of deterring violations and establishing compliance.

We are certainly open to other suggestions and we have considered with interest the proposals of the United Kingdom and of the Federal Republic of Germany, envisaging additional means of verification. At the same time, we believe that the most urgent task is to concretely address the main aspects and to avoid academic debates that might distract our attention.

We also think that an advance data exchange with provisions for its verification will significantly contribute to a general increase of confidence and thus constitute an important element to facilitate the adoption of a ban.

In this context, Italy is heartened by the fact that a growing number of countries are taking a direct interest in the negotiations for a ban, which, to be really effective, must be supported by all countries concerned and - ideally - should be of a universal character.

We wonder whether it may be feasible to contemplate a methodological approach aimed at disposing of the solution of the most important issues in the shortest possible time while setting temporarily aside the cases of less vital character. These might indeed be tackled at a later stage. A prolonged lack of success in finalizing any instrument on the global prohibition of chemical weapons may in fact be interpreted as a failure in preventing an unchecked dissemination of militarily relevant chemical technologies around the world: a prospect casting an historic responsibility upon this body.

Another important element of the convention is certainly related to the institutional aspects. In fact, it will be essential, in the Italian view, to ensure a balanced and satisfactory representation in the organs which will have competence for implementing the convention and ensuring compliance.

Italy is convinced that universal and loyal participation in the future convention will only be ensured through a widespread feeling that all legitimate interests are protected through fair representation.