

(Mr. Gonsalves, India)

The work of the Conference on a chemical-weapons convention which has constituted the bulk of the substantive parts of its annual reports for the past several years has, unlike almost all our other endeavours, met with a reasonable degree of success. Ambassador Turbanski's contribution to the success that has so far been achieved has been rightly acknowledged in this chamber and we are confident that under the guidance of its new Chairman, Ambassador Cromartie, the Ad hoc Committee will make further progress. We must in passing reassert our commitment to achieving a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons and we are gratified to note that we in this Conference will not be diverted by the lesser aspect of non-proliferation of chemical weapons. We must also caution against the perceived tendency to suggest that chemical weapons are the only issue that the Conference on Disarmament can seriously handle. It is our hope that the important work on a chemical-weapons convention will overcome the long standing obstacles this year especially since the major chemical-weapon States have resolved to supplement and accelerate it through enhanced bilateral consultations.

CD/PV. 342

32

(Mr. Kerroum, Algeria)

First of all, a chemical-weapons convention is the only point on which the Conference on Disarmament, in the course of long years, has been able to carry out concrete negotiations and make significant progress. This is a perfect illustration of the complementary nature of multilateral and bilateral negotiations.

CD/PV. 342

33

(Mr. Kerroum, Algeria)

Secondly, the necessarily universal nature of such a convention and the involvement of all States which that implies mean that our forum is the most obvious venue for its preparation.

Thirdly, the encouragement given by Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev with a view to concluding a convention should logically result in a breakthrough and speed up its completion.

Lastly, it is self-evident that this convention can only mean the total elimination of chemical weapons if it prohibits their development, production and stockpiling. It cannot possibly have a non-proliferation function or constitute any sort of obstacle to the chemicals industry which is the very foundation of development, particularly in agriculture.