

(Mr. Donowaki, Japan)

responsibility. The question of responsibility is a very delicate one and if we try to provide for the responsibility of States retroactively for who knows how many years, we will create some confusion. For that reason my delegation believes that a more practical approach, rather than establishing such responsibility, would be to make appropriate provisions to settle the question satisfactorily. My delegation is ready to make concrete proposals which should be feasible, practical and conducive to the settlement of this question in our negotiations.

Of course, we are aware that in connection with the question of old and abandoned chemical weapons, there are suggestions that perhaps a cut-off date should be set at a certain point in the past which might help solve the problem to a great extent. My delegation may agree to such suggestions. But all these matters should be discussed in the consultations to be conducted by the Friend of the Chair, the Ambassador of Indonesia.

(Mr. Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

The Conference is an institution for the democratization of international life and for collective participation in a field that historically was the preserve of the major Powers or those which possessed powerful armaments. While there is something true in the globalization of problems, their globalization, interdependence, disarmament and security problems will become increasingly multilateral, and not in the technical sense reflected in the number of negotiators or participants in the negotiations but in the conceptual sense. The Conference must not only survive but continue in the new conditions to play a central role. To what extent this general trend towards multilateralization will be reflected in the facts will depend on our ability to understand the new agenda, our readiness to act and adapt our goals and means. If the problem is approached in this manner, the boundaries between multilateral, regional and bilateral negotiations will gradually disappear. I am certain that the Conference is on the threshold of making history with the convention on chemical weapons by elaborating the most comprehensive system of security and cooperation in the history of disarmament, which of course would strengthen its role and give it self-confidence. The Conference, in the shape of all that it contains, reflects or implies, is a complex endeavour all of whose effects are difficult to gauge, but to the extent that the process of standardizing criteria for analysing and synthesizing the new realities continues, we may view its future with optimism. We should avoid the risk that the defeat of fundamentalist ideologies will become the defeat of ideas, or that the failure of one aggressive ideology will be replaced by others.