

(Mr. Chadha, India)

whose future is uncertain and which does not ensure their security from the very beginning. If at all, such an assessment needs to be made on the convention's entry into force by all States which subscribe to it, on an equal footing. The ideal way to ensure universality is to make the convention attractive for those who join it. To this end, the interests of those who possess chemical weapons must be matched by the interests of those who do not, and who will accept curbs on their chemical industry - which plays an important role in their development - in the hope of achieving enhanced security.

On the subject of challenge inspection, India was among those who welcomed the approach adopted by Ambassador Hyltenius. We believe that, once a request for challenge inspection is received, the area of interest is enlarged and becomes the concern of all States parties, who are then legitimately involved in seeking a reassurance that the convention is not being violated. The multilateral character of challenge inspection, therefore, needs to be ensured.

Preliminary discussions have also been held on the subject of the composition of the Executive Council. We believe that the Council must be representative of the interests of all States parties. However, in practice it is possible that certain parties will serve on the Executive Council more frequently than others, in accordance with accepted criteria. This need not be seen to detract from the basic principles of equitable geographic balance, non-discrimination and the need for universal adherence.

We shall be having detailed discussions on Schedules during our inter-sessional work. In our view, specific chemicals should be included in Schedule 1, rather than whole families of chemicals or analogues. Each individual chemical should be assessed for its toxicity level and application range. If found to have no civilian application, a specific chemical could then be included in Schedule 1. Research should also be allowed on those chemicals which have more applications than just weapons use. Adopting a very narrow view on the thresholds for Schedule 2 and 3 chemicals will only stifle the chemical industry. The interests of security have to be matched with the objectives of development. It is with this aim in mind that my delegation has always adopted an attitude of flexible dialogue on all aspects and forms of verification for the proposed convention.

I am sure that we all share the sense of urgency and realize that the chemical weapons negotiations are at a critical stage. Taking the priority of the nuclear issues into account, we hope that the Conference on Disarmament will set itself a time-frame within which to conclude its negotiations on a chemical weapons convention.