

(Mr. Lineham, New Zealand)

New Zealand has excluded nuclear weapons from its territory, including its ports. There has never been a need for nuclear weapons in New Zealand. Their exclusion does not diminish security in any way. It enhances it. New Zealand has joined with the other countries of the South Pacific Forum in the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty to limit the chances of nuclear rivalry in the South Pacific. As the Prime Minister, Mr. David Lange, pointed out when he addressed the Conference last year, that Treaty, by lowering the nuclear risk, increases the security of all.

New Zealand places the greatest importance on the work of the Conference on Disarmament in negotiating disarmament measures based on that central principle. We seek to work with the Conference to help achieve that objective of increasing global security through effective controls on armaments.

We are encouraged that the Conference has worked in a positive atmosphere this year. We look to the future with hope for progress on a number of items on the agenda. It would be a serious commentary on the disarmament process if those hopes are again frustrated.

We join with those who express the hope that there will be results in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear arms and arms in space. If the political will is shown in those negotiations, this Conference will be better able to negotiate the agreements to give the multilateral framework for effective disarmament measures.

Chemical weapons is the area in which the Conference has moved closest to fulfilling its mandate of negotiating disarmament agreements to provide increased security for all. During the last two or three years the concern of the world about chemical weapons has heightened considerably. We have a common conviction that we urgently need a convention completely banning the development, production, stockpiling as well as the use of chemical weapons.

Earlier this year a group of specialists appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General confirmed that Iraqi forces had used chemical weapons against Iranian forces. And there have been assessments made in this Conference by other delegations that further countries are developing the capability to produce and deploy chemical weapons. These developments point out the necessity and the urgency of concluding as soon as possible a comprehensive chemical weapons convention.

New Zealand has always condemned the use of these barbaric weapons, whose employment in war has been outlawed for over 60 years. We have accepted and strongly support the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons. New Zealand was associated with the resolution 37/98D adopted by the United Nations General Assembly which elaborated the procedures which provide for investigation by the Secretary-General into allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

Pursuant to these procedures we nominated a chemistry laboratory of the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research to undertake tests for the presence of prohibited chemical agents if called upon to do so.