

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

I also wish to welcome the positive step taken by the United States on 28 July in declaring the location of each of its chemical production facilities. Egypt considers this as a contribution to the confidence-building measures needed to enhance our efforts with a view to concluding the convention. We also welcome the step taken last year by the Soviet Union in the military facility of Shikhany, and invite other States to take similar actions in order to strengthen the atmosphere of confidence.

Egypt fully supports the current efforts to conclude a convention to ban chemical weapons. Egypt is a party to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. Egypt was also at the forefront of the States that signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in 1972. Unfortunately, certain circumstances prevailing in our region prevented us from speeding up its ratification. We do hope that such considerations will not arise with respect to future disarmament agreements.

I seize this opportunity to reiterate that Egypt considers that the prohibition of chemical weapons has become a basic norm of international law in our contemporary world, which should be scrupulously observed. Though Egypt recognizes that a considerable degree of progress has been achieved in our work, we do however realize that we still have a long way ahead. Many of the remaining differences concern concepts and methodology, and are not confined to mere drafting details. Like many other States, Egypt considers that the conditio sine qua non for a State to enter into a convention that affects important aspects of national security and undertake a wide range of obligations is that such a convention must be applicable to all States. Certain key countries, including all those in the so-called "hot" regions, should become parties simultaneously. The non-accession of some States could well be the rock upon which the convention would come to grief.

In pursuing the goal of attaining universality, we believe that two basic elements should at this stage be considered: prior consultations and guarantees and sanctions. To realize prior consultations, on the largest scale possible, Egypt does not subscribe to the view that the Conference on Disarmament should submit the convention directly to the General Assembly for adoption. Egypt prefers that an invitation be addressed to all States, members and non-members of the Conference on Disarmament alike, to attend a conference devoted to consideration of the convention. We also believe that some form of preparatory work should be initiated as soon as possible to exchange views on all the dimensions and possible implications of the convention. In this context, I would like to recall the proposal presented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia at the SSOD-III for the convening of a special United Nations conference to consider and approve the CW convention. Egypt sees considerable merit in this proposal. We support the convening of an international conference under United Nations auspices, open to all potential signatories of the convention. In our view this procedure would ensure direct participation and would consequently greatly contribute to the conclusion of a comprehensive document acceptable to all.

The other element related to the concept of universality is the issue of guarantees and sanctions. In all candour, without guarantees and without sanctions, we fear, the convention may be neither universal nor credible. We