

(Mr. Huslid, Norway)

We know that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons in war. That Protocol is adhered to by more than 100 countries. It has, however, no verification provisions. For this reason, an understanding was reached in this Conference in 1983 to incorporate in the convention on which we are now negotiating a prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. It is, of course, necessary to see to it that this is done in a way which does not erode the status of the Geneva Protocol, which is one of the oldest arms control treaties. The incorporation of a prohibition of the use of chemical weapons in the chemical weapons convention could, in fact, reinforce the Geneva Protocol.

It is therefore necessary to devise a proper verification mechanism which could be included in the new convention and applied in cases of allegations of use of chemical weapons. In order to contribute to this, both Canada and Norway initiated research programmes on verification of alleged use of chemical weapons in this field in 1981. The results of this research have been submitted to the Conference on Disarmament. It follows from the documents which have already been submitted that Canada and Norway have studied all phases of the verification of alleged use of chemical weapons, i.e. from establishment of an inspection team and the team's investigation to submission of its report.

Against this background and taking into account the advanced phase of the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention, Canada and Norway have jointly elaborated a draft treaty text concerning general procedures for the verification of alleged use of chemical weapons.

Any allegation of the use of chemical weapons would, of course, be a matter of the most serious concern to the States parties to a convention banning chemical weapons altogether. Immediate on-site inspection, whether at the invitation of the State party on whose territory the alleged use of chemical weapons occurred or at the request of another State party, would be necessary for the purpose of maintaining the effectiveness and authority of the convention. Thus provisions in article IX concerning consultations, co-operation and fact-finding have relevance to verification of alleged use of chemical weapons, and the procedures applicable for verifying such an event should be included in an annex to article IX. We have thus elaborated a proposal for such an annex. In drawing up this proposal we have consulted a number of countries.

I cannot here go into any detail as to the concrete content of this proposal, and I refer to the paper, but I would like to mention a few salient points. The proposal requires that, upon receipt of a request from a State party for an inspection, the International Authority shall immediately notify the State party (or States parties) concerned of the requirement to conduct on-site inspection within 48 hours. The State party (or States parties) so notified shall make the necessary preparations for the arrival of the inspection team. The team should comprise a number of International Inspectors with the necessary qualifications, experience and training, as well as supporting staff with special skills or training, who may be required to assist the International Inspectors.