

These few examples -- in multilateral and bilateral agreements -- demonstrate not only the importance of verification and compliance, but the political sensitivity of the whole process of detecting and handling events suggesting possible non-compliance. Indeed, recent concerns about verification and compliance seem in some cases to have eroded confidence among the parties to arms control agreements rather than reinforced it. None the less, it is the Canadian position, which I wish to emphasize, that the careful negotiation and drafting of adequate and effective verification provisions and the establishment of the necessary implementing mechanisms is essential to preventing such a deterioration of confidence. This applies a fortiori to agreements involving nuclear weapons and nuclear tests.

In my Ottawa statement, I pointed out that "Clearly, no verification can be totally foolproof. A verification mechanism must be able to detect, beyond a reasonable doubt, any violation of an agreement that would permit a State to acquire, or clearly indicate an intention to acquire, a military capability threatening to the national security of any other party". I analysed in that statement, at some length, the standard of verification which might be acceptable. Since I have circulated copies of my Ottawa statement to all delegations, I will not take the time of the Conference to read it into the record.

CD/PV.433

pp.16-17

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25.8.87 CTB,CW

My delegation has already had occasion to speak on this subject; therefore I will merely recall that the lack of negotiations under item 1 cannot have any valid justification, particularly in the light of the new political and technical developments which have been recorded on this issue. In this context, the input of the Group of Seismic Experts, which has embarked on a new stage of its work, deserves our commendation.

A chemical weapons ban is still the sole topic on which genuine negotiations are taking place. The Ad hoc Committee dealing with this task has made further progress under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus, to whom my delegation would like to pay special tribute. This progress is reflected in particular in the "rolling text" bearing the symbol CD/CW/WP.167. Nevertheless, some aspects of the future convention remain controversial, and the Ad hoc Committee even marked time during the second part of the session on questions which were thought to be on the point of being settled. Thus it is extremely important that all delegations should show their firm resolve to arrive at solutions on the main issues still pending, and that nothing should further complicate an already complex situation.

Problems related to verification and compliance continue to be the subject of intensive consideration and consultation within the Ad hoc Committee. From experience to date we should draw the lesson that a realistic reply to these undoubtedly important questions lies in the search for a balance between two requirements. On the one hand, the convention must contain provisions which will ensure that all States parties will comply with the commitments they undertake. On the other hand, these provisions should not lead to the creation of situations of needless tension or hamper the development of the