

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

During the exercise, the observer from the requesting State was given a considerable amount of leeway in observing the pre-inspection briefing, the debriefing and the activities of the inspection team and its subteams. It was felt afterwards that the observer would have been in a very good position to advise his national authorities on the efficacy of the conduct of the inspection and on its findings, without interfering with the inspection or obtaining sensitive information.

On the whole, the exercise showed that under circumstances of managed access, sensitive information could be adequately protected at this military site, while at the same time the inspection team was provided with enough information to draw reliable conclusions with regard to the presence of CW. One related problem was the inability of the inspection team to inspect medical records owing to Canadian laws that protect the privacy of the patient. It was felt that this issue should be carefully considered in the CD.

Canada and the Netherlands agreed that all samples would be analysed off-site at the TNO laboratories in the Netherlands. Although analysis at a fully equipped modern laboratory had the advantage of producing very reliable test results and, at the same time, reducing the size of the inspection team and the quantity of its equipment, off-site inspection posed the problem of maintaining the chain of custody during storage, transportation and analysis of the samples. As our experts are already aware, further consideration will need to be given to this matter.

On the whole the joint Canada/Netherlands trial challenge inspection amounted to a rather satisfactory and useful experience. It showed once more that the procedures laid down in the "rolling text" so far, although not yet perfect, do in principle provide an excellent framework for the carrying out of such inspections. It contains the instruments required to ascertain that the provisions of the future chemical weapons convention are complied with. I might therefore encourage all potential States parties to the future convention to participate in trial challenge inspections, in order to help us further fine-tune this aspect of the CW verification régime.

Some of the issues we have identified in our report on the trial challenge inspection could possibly be addressed in the Ad Hoc Committee and its subgroups, while other issues might not need to be addressed until a later stage. This is a matter for discussion by our technical and legal experts.

I should not let this opportunity go by without thanking the Canadian authorities, both military and civilian, for their splendid co-operation. As the inspection took place in Germany, our appreciation also goes, of course, to the German authorities.

Finally, we look forward to and count on the completion of our negotiations this year. We believe therefore that the new Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons should be set up without delay. The new "rolling text" just introduced by the former Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons provides an excellent basis for continuing, if not redoubling, our efforts.