

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

presentation of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. It was useful to hear his summary of the provisions of the draft chemical weapons convention. We would, however, caution that the text of the convention speaks for itself. The Chairman's summary should not be considered in any way as an authoritative interpretation or explanation of it. My delegation has also noted the statements made by a number of delegations setting out their national positions on the draft convention. Where these statements simply reiterate the provisions of the convention in order to correct erroneous statements made by others, we have no difficulty with them. But the United Kingdom does not accept that national statements seeking to interpret the text of the convention have any authoritative status at the level of interpretation or otherwise.

Mr. LANUS (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, may I first of all thank you for the kind words you addressed to me this morning? I know that your management in the conduct of this Conference has been extremely successful and I am sure you will overcome the final procedural difficulties that still confront us with the same discreet efficiency that has characterized your management. I cannot conceal my satisfaction at arriving in this forum at such a crucial moment, when negotiations as arduous as those on the chemical weapons convention have come to an end, proving that the multilateral body is a possible and necessary tool in building the post-cold-war world. Furthermore the words of Ambassador Amorim of Brazil, which were clear, reaffirm the commitment of my region, Latin America, to the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction through the expected entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Many elements are combining to make this moment one of celebration and of expectations concerning the future of this Conference. It is not my intention to delay matters this afternoon. I hope to be able in due course to address this plenary at greater length and with greater formality. Very briefly, however, I would like to express gratitude for what has been said by Ambassador Hou of China, Ambassador Celso Amorim of Brazil and Counsellor González of Chile, and to assure you, Sir, and the distinguished colleagues around this negotiating table that I hope to continue and to intensify, so far as possible, the traditionally active participation of Argentina in this forum, the only one in which a truly representative and worldwide membership has a mandate to negotiate legal instruments designed to make this planet a safer place. I shall devote all my efforts, and those of my delegation, to that end. I hope to be able to count on the experience of my distinguished colleagues and of our Secretary-General in this initial stage of my participation in the Conference on Disarmament.