

(Mr. Fernández Ordóñez, Spain)

Spain does not possess such weapons, and we consider it a matter of the greatest urgency to conclude the multilateral convention to ban their production, development, use or storage. Spain is aware of the difficulties involved in verification, but this difficulty should not serve as an excuse to delay a universal agreement. On the contrary, it should be an incentive so that all States make the necessary efforts. This urgency is underscored by the recent use of this kind of weapon in certain conflicts, and I would like to add in talking about verification that the intrusive nature of the verification machinery that will have to be incorporated into the convention should in no way be perceived by the chemical industries or by certain countries as institutionalizing interference in matters of industrial secrecy or interference in the development of chemical industry for peaceful or beneficial purposes. It is simply a question of accepting certain measures that provide the international community as a whole with an assurance that the horrors of chemical warfare have been eradicated. In this context, my Government welcomes the progress made in the bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union, although this agreement is not sufficient because of course it is limited exclusively to the bilateral level. Spain believes it is necessary to continue to pursue the policy of non-proliferation of chemical precursors. We favour this complementary policy of non-proliferation, which is another way of achieving the ultimate goal of eliminating this threat. Spain considers that the multilateral convention on chemical weapons is not only a desirable goal but an imperative, and consequently it welcomes the national initiatives presented in this body in the form of declarations of non-possession or non-production, reports on national trial inspections or reports on the future composition and structure of national authorities. In this context I wish to announce the intention of the Spanish Government to make similar contributions in this forum, so as to add our efforts to those already being made in this Conference.