

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

route for their synthesis. It seems to my delegation, therefore, illogical that plants for the production of these compounds should be treated differently according to whether the final product is a binary chemical weapon, or a chemical weapon in which the agent is preformed. If the periods of six months and two years are appropriate in the former case, they would seem also to be appropriate in the latter. My delegation agrees with the Soviet view that the declaration and destruction of production facilities, and the verification to provide sufficient confidence to other parties that they have been eliminated, require further consideration.

I was disappointed that the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union was unable to give further clarification of his Government's proposal for international inspection of the destruction of stockpiles on a quota basis. My delegation has always made it plain that we are fully prepared to give careful consideration to the ideas of other delegations, and to work together to find mutually acceptable solutions to the problems which remain in our negotiations; but it is difficult to work for such solutions when one has no more than a general concept of the position of other delegations. If we had a clearer idea of what is meant by inspection on a quota basis, and by the new Soviet idea of a differentiated approach to verification of destruction of stocks, then we would be able to see whether a solution could be found to this important question. My delegation therefore hopes that at the beginning of the next session we shall hear in detail how these approaches to the verification of destruction of stockpiles would be put into practice. Without such clarifications, further progress in this area will be difficult.

Finally, I should like to turn to an important general point. The verification regime of the convention, taken as a whole, will need to provide sufficient confidence to potential parties that its provisions will be strictly observed; in the first place to enable it to enter into force at all; and then to sustain it, through the exceptionally long transitional period of 10 years, and thereafter on a permanent basis. I say, "taken as a whole", because the confidence among parties and potential parties, that the verification provides them with an adequate degree of assurance, that the convention is being fully respected, will need to be built up from several interdependent elements. One element of primary importance must be provision for a system of verification by challenge, which would also provide a reliable recourse to States which are suspicious or dissatisfied about the implementation of the convention by other parties. Nevertheless, we see a risk that the repeated use of challenge could create a climate of distrust, and thus undermine the very confidence which is so important for the continued life of the convention. It seems to us, therefore to be vital that the convention should in addition, include a system of routine inspections which would not involve any element of suspicion or accusation, but would take the weight off the ultimate safety-net of verification by challenge. As my delegation has already indicated in its working paper CD/353, we believe that the system of routine verification should comprise four distinct elements:

Verification of the destruction of stocks;

Verification of the destruction of production facilities;

Monitoring of production of super-toxic chemical agents for permitted purposes; and

Verification of non-production of chemical weapons.