

(Mr. von Wagner, Germany)

multilateral arms control to this date. Whereas - in the years just passed - disarmament treaties between the former cold war opponents have proliferated, arms control on a global scale seems to have come to a standstill.

This not too rosy picture would change dramatically if we finally came to terms with the few remaining issues of the chemical weapons convention. The convention would provide invaluable fresh impetus for the endeavour of multilateral arms control. The liberation of mankind from the threat of chemical weapons would have positive implications going far beyond the negotiating matter.

In addition to the direct security benefits, States parties to the convention would discover a completely new experience in applying an unprecedented body of provisions for global disarmament and verification. Experience in applying the instruments of the convention would help us to understand that reliable disarmament does not imply risk, but opportunity; not a danger to national sovereignty, but a singular opportunity to build on the foundation of a new, cooperative concept of international security.

The world needs such a new, cooperative security concept. We all know the global challenges of our time, which have united us into one large "community for survival". We have seen the fading away of the old East-West conflict, we witness the transformation into the vision of a zone of peaceful cooperation stretching from North America over the Atlantic Ocean and Europe to the Pacific. In this process, the cooperative instruments of confidence-building, arms control and disarmament have played a key role. It is true that these instruments cannot be utilized independently from overall political conditions. But it is also true that without such cooperative instruments tension and confrontation cannot be transformed into common efforts of building peace.

Looking at the remaining negotiating problems of the chemical weapons convention in this broader context, their relative significance, having been put into perspective, should have become clearer. The remaining obstacles must be surmountable, although they reflect serious questions like verification, trade issues, cooperation and old chemical weapons. Having a vision of the larger issues at stake, we will overcome these obstacles.

The success of the chemical weapons convention will depend largely on its universal acceptance. You, Mr. President, rightly pointed to this important feature in your opening statement. In this respect, the already large number of countries which have pledged early signature is very encouraging, and the Cartagena Declaration, which was introduced to the CD by Ambassador de Rivero of Peru is an additional pledge of the highest importance to this effect. Furthermore, all delegations in Geneva have clearly pronounced their strong interest in the success of the convention. The attractiveness of the convention will also play a key role with regard to universality. But more will be needed, in particular demonstrations of responsibility on the regional level. In some regions, long-standing political conflict might seem to require prior solution before accession to the chemical weapons convention is