

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

Recent contributions to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee from various delegations are a promising signal of the interest delegations take in the work on chemical weapons. I mention the very useful document CD/713, presented by Ambassador Imai of Japan, about quantitative aspects of a chemical weapons convention. The basic conclusion in this Paper, namely that in various chemical facilities verification can be assured by taking a surprisingly small number of random samples, is encouraging. It would mean that, according to this method, intrusiveness can be kept at a modest level.

The Working Papers from Norway submitted to the plenary as CD/702, CD/703 and CD/704 on the verification of alleged use of chemical weapons, are again proof of the long-standing high quality of the research conducted by Norway in this field.

The problem of chemical weapons production facilities was addressed in the statement of Ambassador Issraelyan on 22 April last. We consider this contribution as a modest but constructive step forward. We hope that other important aspects of this problem will receive also due attention.

We welcome the document presented by the United States on the chemical stockpile disposal problem (circulated under CD/711). This paper provides us with a great amount of interesting and hitherto unknown details about location and composition of chemical stockpiles in the United States. It would, indeed, be important if other countries will follow suit by providing us with information on the stocks located in their country.

Having said all this, allow me to take the opportunity to thank both the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and the three Chairmen of the Working Groups for their untiring efforts to produce more substantive results at this year's sessions, possibly in treaty language. We certainly owe it to them that work is well under way for a rolling text of the draft convention, which will reflect the progress so far achieved.

My final words today are for my colleagues here around this table and others who have expressed their appreciation for the Chemical Weapons Workshop held in the Netherlands in June. With the commitment and enthusiasm that dominated this two-day seminar, the CW convention could be realized in a week's time. The Netherlands Government is very grateful for the kind words addressed to it in the aftermath of the Workshop. Let us hope that the spirit of commitment and goodwill that inspired the participants of the Workshop will find its expression at this Conference by early agreement on the relevant issues.