

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

Another area which Egypt is following closely is the negotiations on the organizational aspects. The Executive Council remains for most members of this Conference one of the most important issues. We believe that its size should be determined on the basis of the limits of the functional requirements, that is to say the rapidity of convening meetings and the ability to undertake timely decision making. Its composition should be based on both a geographical criterion and an industrial criterion. As for voting in the Executive Council, we favour the application of the rule of unanimity when it comes to substantive matters. However, we realize that unanimity might not always emerge. We should therefore provide for some other rule to avoid paralysis in the Executive Council. This is a point which should be further considered.

An issue which attracts special attention is that of "verification". We do share the views expressed by many delegations that we need a credible, verifiable convention without any loopholes. It is therefore imperative that the convention should include effective verification provisions. Yet such requirements should not be abused. Verification should never be distorted and stretched to threaten the national security of States parties. We are inclined to consider the non-abuse of this device to be as important as the concept of verification itself. We therefore support the inclusion of detailed provisions on verification procedures, in particular with respect to challenge inspection. In our view considerable progress has been achieved in this regard. The present state of the "rolling text" provides a basis for verification of activities relating to schedules [1] and [2]. However, we do realize that more time has yet to be devoted to the super-toxic lethal chemicals listed in schedule [1] and produced on a laboratory scale, and the relevance of this to medical and defence research. With respect to the schedules annexed to this article, we believe that for practical reasons, there should be a procedure to update them whenever necessary. Egypt is of the view that schedules [1] and [3] should be subject to modification whenever new chemical agents are produced.

We are rather concerned with the lacunae elsewhere. In this respect my delegation can only support the efforts undertaken by Mr. Lüdeking, Chairman of the Working Group on verification, to reach agreement on this issue. In this connection we welcome the proposal for ad hoc checks put forward by the Federal Republic of Germany in an attempt to bridge the "verification gap". Meanwhile, Egypt is following the work on this issue with great attention.

Egypt welcomes the positive step taken by certain States to have national trial inspections in their chemical facilities. These trials have resulted in a progressive boost in the area of inspection and verification, where the core of the problem lies. Through this experiment we may be able to solve the difficult equation of verification versus confidentiality, and avoid impeding the work and production of the chemical facilities. These trial inspections prove the importance and vitality of national verification and the creation of national authorities in this domain as stipulated in article VII.

My delegation considers that the convention should provide an umbrella for the States parties, in the form of assistance provided by other States parties to limit the effect of the use or the threat of use of chemical weapons. We believe that accession to the convention will depend to a large