

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

area between 22 and 24 May this year. This was a very positive experience, and in that context our gratitude and appreciation go to the German authorities, through Ambassador von Wagner and his delegation, for the excellent arrangements and the highly professional way in which they conducted this complex joint exercise.

In our view, the inspection, details of which will undoubtedly be presented with greater authority by the organizing delegation, succeeded in demonstrating that a challenge inspection is a highly intrusive exercise, but that it can nevertheless be made compatible with the necessary confidentiality that must protect certain military facilities or others with a high commercial or scientific value. The concept of managed access, duly developed on an ad hoc basis - that is, taking into account the characteristics of the site to be inspected - should allow physical access by the organization's inspectors to any site located in a State party whenever a properly justified request is made for challenge inspection.

The exercise at Pferdersfeld made it clear that there are areas - the role of observers, the relationship between the inspection team and the receiving State, the closure (securing) of the site, the availability of reliable means of communication for the inspection team, the need to draw up a fully agreed glossary of important terms for the convention in the five official languages of the United Nations, all issues on which considerable work still has to be done with a view to improvement. The conclusion, however, is encouraging in indicating that it is possible to aim for a strong system of challenge inspections without unduly affecting the security of the receiving State.

Very recently the Ad Hoc Committee received with keen interest a new proposal on challenge inspections put forward by your delegation, Mr. President, along with the delegations of Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom. It joins the existing proposals and will undoubtedly constitute a major contribution to our deliberations. We believe that a number of the elements we identified when referring to the inspection carried out in Germany in May have been taken into account by the authors of this initiative, and we welcome this fact as an encouraging element. At the same time, we think it useful to point out a few basic points that the final blueprint of verification under the convention should in our view include in its final form.

First of all, any system of challenge inspections agreed upon should guarantee the inspection team rapid, not to say immediate, access to the agreed site. Otherwise the challenge would turn into a phased warning, which we do not think would be in anyone's interest, not to mention the fact that any delay, be it at the moment of initiation or later on, would in our view contradict the very principle and the definition of challenge inspections. Secondly, access for the inspectors should be understood primarily as physical access, with the appropriate limitations arising out of the concept of managed access, carried out on an ad hoc basis in the light of the necessarily differing importance of the requested site from the viewpoint of practical