

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

What is needed now is a much more acute sense of urgency in the upcoming inter-sessional work and at next year's session of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We must not forget that while we are "successfully" developing the "rolling text" of the chemical weapons convention, new chemical weapons are being produced and stockpiled and chemical weapons are being used on an unprecedented scale. The overall sophistication of chemical weapons will make it more and more difficult to trace them in the wide network of chemical industry facilities; their further proliferation is contrary to the basic objectives of the convention we are negotiating. In this connection the Group of Socialist Countries considers the continued production, modernization or acquisition of chemical weapons after the chemical weapons convention enters into force to be unacceptable, since that could lead to further proliferation of chemical weapons and would thus be contrary to the objectives of the convention. The security of the States parties can be ensured immediately after its entry into force through the implementation of a number of measures which would freeze chemical weapon stocks at current levels and would lead to their gradual, balanced and complete destruction.

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Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America):

Overall, the results of the negotiations this summer present a mixed picture. Ironically, this does not stem from the lack of a common purpose. The members of the Conference share a common objective - a complete, effectively verifiable and truly global ban on chemical weapons. The Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Sujka, and the chairmen of the three working groups, Mr. Numata, Mr. Macedo and Mr. Cima, have worked in a serious and dedicated way to bring such a convention into being. We appreciate their commitment and their hard work. Furthermore, we are pleased that, despite some differences, the Ad hoc Committee was finally able to find compromises that allowed it to reach agreement on its report. In particular, the Committee has recommended that a new procedure be established that should end the repeated disputes over listing of documents in its reports, reduce unnecessary duplication, and promote the principle of fiscal responsibility. The United States delegation will continue to seek ways to make economies in the work of the Committee, while not harming the substantive negotiations. I might add that this effort, in line with the overall need to economise, should extend across the board to other areas of the Conference's work.

However, the fact remains that the tempo of progress has slowed down when it should be maintained at a pace reflecting the continuing urgency of our work. An example is the work on the so-called "final clauses", where there has even been backward movement. I would like to offer this morning some constructive suggestions for moving ahead. These suggestions can be grouped into three categories: first, greater participation and openness; second, a focus on the hard problems; and third, an effort to find creative approaches. I would like to outline our own ideas on each of these categories.

With regard to greater participation, the United States is encouraged by the fact that the importance of achieving a truly global ban is increasingly recognized. For example, the delegations of the German Democratic Republic and Egypt have made constructive suggestions for consulting countries who are not currently represented in the negotiations. We welcome these ideas.