

(Ms. Hernes, Norway)

The multilateral negotiating process has been facilitated by the bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union. We therefore call on these two States to resume their talks without delay. The United States and the Soviet Union, both of whom possess large stocks of chemical weapons, have a special responsibility in contributing to the conclusion of the convention.

My Government has appreciated the information concerning the United States programme of destruction of unitary chemical weapons, and welcomes the decision by the Soviet Union to begin eliminating its chemical weapon stockpiles in 1989. We look forward to the announced visit of experts to the new destruction facility in Chapayevsk. We also note with satisfaction the decision by the Government of the United States to explore ways to accelerate the removal of stocks of United States chemical weapons from the Federal Republic of Germany.

The United States and the Soviet Union are still the only countries which have declared that they possess chemical weapons. We call on other countries possessing such weapons to make similar declarations and draw up plans for the destruction of their stocks. As a confidence-building measure, all chemical-weapon States should furnish information about the number of their stocks, their location, composition and overall size. This is in keeping with the proposal by the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the multilateral exchange of data relevant to the chemical weapons convention. Norway has recently provided the Committee on Chemical Weapons with information concerning production, processing and consumption of relevant toxic chemicals and the precursors.

Norway is continuing her research programme on verification of alleged use of chemical weapons being carried out by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment. The programme is based on field experiments designed to provide realistic data for the development of procedures for verification of alleged use of chemical weapons. During the coming summer session we intend to present the results of studies on a new system for analysing gas concentrations in samples of soil, vegetation, clothing, etc., not previously used for such purposes.

My Government has strongly condemned the use of chemical weapons in violation of the Geneva Protocol. Efforts must be made to see to it that these insidious weapons are not used again. It is necessary to rid the world of these weapons. This can only be achieved through universal adherence to the new convention. The Conference on Disarmament should bear this in mind in its negotiations.

Until a global ban becomes effective, export controls on dual-purpose chemicals will play an important role in preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons. Norway has imposed export controls on 13 such dual-purpose chemicals. We support the proposal made by Mr. Genscher, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, in his address to the Conference on Disarmament on 2 March, that government authorization should be required for the export of facilities and equipment which can be used in the production of chemical weapons. In this context, we also note with interest the