

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

The substantive results of the work in question are before you in document CD/734. The open-ended consultations were very well attended and took place in an atmosphere that demonstrated the keen interest of delegations in this work. Mr. Rowe, of Australia, and Mr. Poptchev, of Bulgaria, continued their work as Chairmen of Working Group A and Working Group B respectively with great dedication and enthusiasm. The Ad Hoc Committee owes a great debt of gratitude to them for the way in which they pursued during the intersessional period the work they had undertaken in the 1986 session, the results of which are contained in the Committee's previous report, CD/727, of 21 August 1986.

When the Committee met again in formal session, on 12 January, it decided that the progress achieved in informal consultations warranted an updating of the rolling text of the draft Convention to incorporate the addition of common ground identified during the intersessional period. This revised version is contained in appendix I to the document before you, CD/734, with the recommendation, in paragraph 9(a), that this appendix should be used for further negotiation and drafting of the Convention. Active work was still continuing until the last day. Two other papers of the Chairman of Working Group A were placed in appendix II so that they could be available for further work in the 1987 session.

As Mr. Wisnoemoerti, of Indonesia, who was Chairman of Working Group C in 1986 and who clarified the issues under Articles VIII and IX, left at the end of the most recent session of the Conference, in August 1986, I undertook, in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee, extensive consultations with many delegations on the subject of article IX and its relation to the Convention as a whole. I am most grateful to those of you who spent the time to give me the benefit of your perceptions both from your national and regional points of view and from the points of view of any Groups to which your countries belong. As a result of those consultations, I came to the conclusion that it would not at this stage help the Conference's work to attempt multilateral consideration of the text of Article IX. I was, however, agreeably surprised by the extent of common ground which I found. I therefore recorded in the Committee's report that I had detected a convergence of views on four points: firstly, that confidence in the Convention should be built up and maintained by routine inspection of declared facilities; secondly, that provisions under Article IX were needed for any party to give voice to its suspicions that another party was not complying with its obligations and to have confidence that these suspicions would be promptly allayed by agreed procedures; thirdly, that such procedures should be regarded as a fundamental source of confidence in the Convention and recourse to them should be a rare event; fourthly, that once these procedures had been invoked, a very short time for resolution of the issue was essential both for reasons inherent in the nature of chemical weapons as well as for wider political reasons. These points do not, of course, form part of the rolling text, which contains provisionally agreed treaty language subject to reservations expressed by square brackets or footnotes.