

(Mr. Batsanov, Russian Federation)

I would like, however, to conclude on an optimistic note and express confidence that the document being presented today will be the last "rolling text" of the draft convention and that the next report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons submitted to the Conference will contain the final agreed draft.

Mr. President, in summing up the results for the past year, I cannot fail to mention the important contribution to the negotiations made by the members of the Ad Hoc Committee's Bureau, the Chairman of Working Group A, Mr. Mashhadi (Iran), the Chairman of Working Group B, Mr. Giżowski (Poland), the Chairman of Working Group C, Mr. Perugini (Italy), and the friends of the Chair, Ambassador Brotodiningrat of Indonesia, Mr. Canonne (France) and Mr. Meerburg (Netherlands). They went about their difficult functions, sacrificing their spare time, with a high degree of responsibility. To a large extent it is thanks to their efforts that progress could be made on a number of the unsettled issues we faced.

I should also like to express my warmest words of gratitude to the personnel of the secretariat and in the first place to our virtually permanent Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons Mr. Bensmail and his deputy, Ms. Hoppe, as well as to Ms. Darby. Their experience and professionalism are highly prized by all participants in the negotiations. I express my gratitude also to the interpreters and translators, with their wonderful knowledge not only of linguistic nuances but also of chemical terminology.

And, naturally, I cannot fail to express my profound thanks to all delegations and representatives of States members and non-members of the Conference on Disarmament for their cooperation, for their readiness to find mutually acceptable solutions and for their support of others, including me as Chairman, and to all members of the Bureau of our Ad Hoc Committee for the period now concluding.

In completing my work as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee by introducing this report today, I want with all my heart to wish the present Chairman, the distinguished Ambassador of Germany, His Excellency, Adolf Ritter von Wagner, the greatest success at this crucial stage of finalization of the work on such a profound and complex document as this first multilateral disarmament instrument in the history of mankind. His great diplomatic experience, his fine sense of tact, his purposefulness and his ability to find mutually acceptable compromises in the most difficult situations are the qualities that led to Ambassador von Wagner's election to the post of Chairman. Ambassador von Wagner faces complex, difficult but solvable tasks. I wish to assure him that the delegation of the Russian Federation, and here I am speaking as the Ambassador of my country, is open to the closest possible cooperation with him in achieving our common lofty goal, the conclusion of a multilateral convention banning chemical weapons. With that I will conclude.