

To sum up, I wish to emphasize again that our document contains all the basic provisions regarding the Consultative Committee, provisions which are considered to be our contribution to the wide-ranging discussion of the concept of that Committee, in a spirit of good co-operation and mutual understanding.

Mr. MONTASSIER (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, on 5 April the French delegation presented its general views on the elimination of stocks of chemical weapons and the dismantling of their production facilities; these views and proposals are set forth in document CD/494.

In a matter of weeks, under the very active chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus and spurred on by the Chairmen of the Working Groups, to whom my delegation wishes to pay tribute collectively, some progress has been made, some problems have been identified more clearly, and it would appear that opinions have developed in a direction which favours the speeding up of negotiations.

Finally, the draft treaty submitted by the Vice-President of the United States on 18 April was brought to our attention and we have studied it carefully. The French delegation stated at the time that it considered the draft treaty a positive contribution to our work. It believes that the assurances given by the United States delegation concerning its willingness to find mutually acceptable solutions on a number of points which have been raised in the course of our discussions confirm the interest of this document, which is the only coherent and complete draft and remains, in our opinion, an essential basis for pursuing our work.

Taking account of all this work, not to mention the other highly interesting contributions of other delegations (Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Great Britain and China) and the extremely instructive visit organized in Münster by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, my delegation today wishes to outline some suggestions for resolving a number of difficult issues. I shall therefore successively deal with some problems of definition, and then of co-ordination of plans for destruction; and I shall also comment briefly on the prohibition of use and the organization of the Consultative Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

With regard to definition, we have often run up against a particularly difficult problem: that of key precursors, a crucial point at which the problems of stocks, production and verification all meet. There are two opposing viewpoints on this subject: those who wish to negotiate on lists of products, category by category; and those who call for a global definition to serve as a universal criterion. After carefully studying various possibilities, my delegation proposes a combination of the two approaches: it suggests a generic definition which would identify families of products and make it possible to draw up lists of products. In the case of each product, it will be necessary to carry precision to the point of determining, first, the degree of toxicity and therefore of risk; then use, exclusively military or partially for civilian purposes; and finally conditions of production, and control over it.

The French delegation intends to submit, at the next session, a technical document in which this outline will be developed.

With regard to the destruction of stocks, useful work has certainly been carried out at this session in bringing us nearer to reasonable solutions. However, two points deserve particular attention.

The French delegation has long stressed the dangers inherent in all reconversion formulas. It is nevertheless ready to display a spirit of compromise and accept the possibility of the conversion of toxic warfare stocks for