

(Mr. Bakkevig, Norway)

stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Cromartie of the United Kingdom, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons made significant progress on important questions in 1986.

Difficult problems still remain to be resolved, particularly in the field of verification. However, the momentum in the negotiations has been sustained, and we are pleased to note the progress achieved so far during the 1987 session.

We feel assured that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in 1987, Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, will spare no efforts in trying to find early and satisfactory solutions to the outstanding problems. In particular, it is necessary to work out details for verification régimes, including routine and on-site inspection on challenge of all facilities and sites where violations could occur. No doubt, solving these questions represents a difficult and complex task. We noted in this regard the statement of Ambassador Nazarkin of the Soviet Union at the plenary meeting on 5 March, when he said that "chemical weapons and the production base for their manufacture are to be destroyed by all States possessing such weapons, including both the Soviet Union and the United States".

The Norwegian Government attaches importance as well to the bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union on an effective and verifiable global convention on chemical weapons. These consultations have already contributed positively to the negotiating process within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

A basic and still unresolved question is the elaboration of modalities for handling requests for on-site inspection on challenge. Norway is of the opinion that the provisions concerning routine on-site inspections should be supplemented by a stringent system for on-site inspections to verify allegations of non-compliance. This would provide the ultimate source of confidence in the convention. Such a system has to satisfy certain criteria, of which the following three are the most essential: firstly, the challenged State must be under the obligation to demonstrate to other States, and especially the challenging State, that it complies with the provisions of the convention. Secondly, an inspection would have to be undertaken immediately after the issue of a challenge. Thirdly, the investigation should be detailed and comprehensive.

Whereas Norway takes part in all aspects of the negotiations on a chemical-weapons ban in the Conference on Disarmament, we have put special emphasis on the question of verification of alleged use of these weapons. In 1981 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated a comprehensive research programme concerning verification of alleged use of chemical weapons. This research programme is carried out by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment. It is based on field experiments in order to make sure that the findings are as realistic as possible.

We have developed procedures for identification of the contaminated area, sampling, field analysis, transportation and final analysis in a laboratory in order to determine whether chemical weapons have been used. These procedures,