

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

the international organization to be set up under the convention. In making this proposal, Mr. Tindemans, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, underlined the symbolic nature that such a choice would have: the establishment of the organization's headquarters in the country where chemical weapons were used for the first time. Such a decision would also illustrate the improvement in the international climate, thanks to which we can look forward to a satisfactory conclusion to the current negotiations. Experience has shown that the Belgian capital is in a position to provide rapidly the infrastructure and logistical support needed for a major organization.

In conclusion I would like to say that the outstanding questions in the field of chemical weapons certainly require the greatest attention, since they touch on such sensitive issues as State security and the protection of industrial interests. However, the Paris Conference gave a powerful political boost to our work that no other initiative could hope to equal. It would be disastrous to let this impetus become dissipated. It would be unacceptable and in fact extremely dangerous for the future of the convention itself if the pointless build-up of technical and political difficulties, intellectual red tape, the very concern for illusory perfection were to lead to delay in the conclusion of an agreement and cause it to suffer the fate of other disarmament initiatives which the loss of a sense of priority objectives condemned to the limbo of oblivion.

An excessive concern for exhaustiveness on the part of the negotiators, apart from adding to the work-load of the Ad hoc Committee and inevitably slowing it down, would result in essential interests and goals being lost from view and would imbue intrinsically secondary issues with an importance they do not possess. Several ideas put forward here for expediting the convention's entry into force deserve our attention: the adoption of national measures in advance with a view to the application of the convention, the delegation of certain purely technical or administrative problems to the Organization or the Preparatory Commission, the destruction of stocks before the convention enters into force and, generally, initiatives for anticipating some of the obligations deriving from it.

As I have already emphasized, the negotiations will proceed in a more favourable international climate of profound commitment to unchallengeable precepts of law and morality. It is this context that we must draw on without delay in order to take up the challenge of chemical weapons and pass a new milestone in the cause of peace and disarmament throughout the world. Hence, more than ever, I believe in the importance of our Conference and in its chances of success.

Mr. HYLTEINIUS (Sweden): In my statement today, I wish to speak on item 4 of our agenda, Chemical weapons, but before doing so, however, I should like to convey to you, Mr. President, the appreciation of my delegation for the excellent manner in which you have presided over the deliberations of the Conference during the month of April. I should also like to take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Yamada, for his skilful guidance during his presidency in March, and especially for his efforts to