

(Mr. Lee, Republic of Korea)

Nuclear disarmament is certainly of high importance to this Conference, but it is not the only concern. The international community is facing many other challenges such as the proliferation of chemical weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

We are happy to note that the Conference on Disarmament has made good progress in elaborating a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction, although some more work still remains to be done before its conclusion.

The conclusion of a multilateral agreement on chemical weapons is a matter of top priority to the international community, particularly because these are weapons of mass destruction easy to manufacture at low cost. Every avenue should be explored so as to ensure the participation of all States with a capability to produce chemical weapons. Together they should work out effective means of on-site and challenge inspection. We hope that this Conference will come up with an effective and verifiable convention on chemical weapons at an early date. As we all know, giving the final touches to a few outstanding issues will be the most difficult yet important part.