

(Mr. Evans, Australia)

I should add that we, along with many whose concerns are about intrusiveness, see resort to challenge inspection as a highly political act, and therefore very much an option of last resort. To ensure that it remains so, we believe that there must be a truly credible regime for routine inspections under article VI. There is a clear link between article VI and article IX, and an effective verification regime under article VI is essential to maintain this link.

On routine inspection our text is consonant with the recent work of the CD's own verification working group, which is considering how schedule III and other relevant CW-capable facilities will be monitored by data reporting and international on-site verification. In our view such an approach provides the best possible balance given the emerging view that current coverage in the "rolling text" of these facilities is inadequate.

Australia shares the view that to restrict the coverage of on-site verification activity only to facilities producing schedule I and II chemicals, while ignoring others which could be readily adaptable to chemical weapons production, would be to build a grave deficiency into the convention. We fully acknowledge that schedule I and II facilities are of particular concern, and have accordingly emphasized inspection arrangements for facilities producing these chemicals. But for the convention to be effective it must allow for inspection of CW-capable facilities. It was clear to us that many countries are of this view.

Equally, many others have concerns that such an extension of verification activity would overwhelm the CWC secretariat, industry and national Governments. We have sought to address those concerns by stipulating a 100 tonnes per annum threshold on whether a facility will be subject to declaration and thereby to possible inspection. Australia judges - on the basis of detailed technical advice - that such a threshold would significantly limit the potential burden on the secretariat, industry and Governments, while ensuring that facilities which pose a real risk to the convention can be monitored.

The provisions concerning verification of the chemical industry also need to provide the flexibility to allow for future developments in that industry and in verification technology. Accordingly we have sought to ensure that article VI is not overburdened with excessive detail, thus providing the secretariat with the flexibility to implement the verification of the chemical industry in the most practically effective and cost-effective manner. The secretariat is allowed the necessary scope to focus its inspection effort on the kinds of facilities which would pose the greatest risks to the objectives of the convention.

We recognize that article XI raises for many countries important issues of principle, chiefly as to how national rights to economic and technological development are to be guaranteed as nations implement their obligations under the convention. May I emphasize at the outset that Australia has no interest whatsoever in hindering either the future development of our own industry or the legitimate aspirations of developing countries? For good economic reasons