

(Mr. Genscher, Federal Republic of Germany)

These devices must be destroyed. It is a gruesome coincidence that some of the most terrible nerve gases were discovered by chance during research into insecticides.

Chemical weapons are not regarded as a deterrent in the war prevention strategy of the Western Alliance. As stated in the Federal Defence Ministry's White Paper of 1983, NATO relies mainly on conventional and nuclear forces even as a deterrent against the use of chemical weapons by the Warsaw Pact. Only a limited amount of chemical warfare agents is thus kept ready for retaliation in the event of a chemical attack. Since chemical weapons do not therefore perform any function in the North Atlantic Alliance's strategy for the prevention of war, there will be no need to possess them when the stocks of all other countries have been destroyed under a chemical weapons convention.

The Federal Republic of Germany does not possess any chemical weapons, and gave a solemn pledge in 1954 not to produce any. My country also unconditionally recognizes the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

Even in peacetime, chemical weapons pose a considerable risk. A chemical weapons convention must curb the alarming proliferation of these weapons. It must counter the danger of chemical weapons becoming "cheap weapons of destruction" in third world trouble-spots. The suffering of the victims of chemical warfare brings home to us the urgent need for action. We followed very closely the remarks by non-aligned representatives at the recent Pugwash Conference to the effect that the third world in particular considers itself exposed to the danger of the use of chemical weapons and is thus interested in a global convention prohibiting such weapons. This bears out our view that regional solutions are not desirable. It also confirms our conviction that most countries will accede to the convention from the start. Our common task will be to urge all States to accede to the convention as soon as it has been concluded.

Chemical weapons must not have a future. This basic consensus of the Geneva Convention on Disarmament must not be called into question. My Government welcomes the fact that the declaration issued at the Washington summit on 10 December 1987 reaffirmed the need for intensified negotiations towards the conclusion of a truly global and verifiable convention on chemical weapons. In the summit declaration of 21 November 1985 too, the two sides agreed to accelerate efforts to conclude an effective and verifiable international convention on this matter. Now is the time for a practicable consensual solution on the basis of the thorough preparations by this Conference thus far, and not for introducing new concepts.

The Conference has before it a draft convention which, thanks to the energetic efforts of the delegations, already contains formulations on large parts of the subject-matter to be covered by the Convention. On virtually all problems, carefully considered proposals have been presented in the form of working papers drawn up by delegations and by the chairmen of the Ad hoc Committee and its Working Groups. We knew from the beginning that verification issues would cause the greatest difficulties. This is not a new problem. The right solution to this problem would not be to dispense with a