

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

definition of key precursors has been provided, work has been done on certain other provisions of the future convention. And now after several years of strenuous negotiating efforts, it is suggested that we should give up objective criteria and replace them with such purely subjective categories as, for example, the notion of "risk" presented by various chemicals. I repeat, this is a subjective concept. It will mean one thing to one State and something else to another State. And it will certainly be very hard to reach agreement on this basis. This kind of approach actually turns the question of key precursors upside down. It is our firm conviction that the first thing to do is to define the criteria and have them agreed upon, and only then, based on those criteria, should a list of key precursors be drawn up. We believe that a technical solution to this problem has already evolved and that it should now be set out as a draft clause for the future convention.

This would open the way to drawing up the list of key precursors as such. Arguments to the effect that certain individual precursors may fail to meet all the established criteria do not stand up to criticism. We presume that exceptions to the general rule, where they are truly necessary, could be dealt with under the convention. Recently we were offered a "new" approach, presented as an important "concession", according to which criteria would be formulated parallel to the drawing up of lists. But this takes us nowhere. The question of criteria will arise whenever another key precursor is added to the list. Therefore criteria should be defined and agreed upon in advance.

The question of the key precursors that can be used to produce binary chemical weapons is of course a separate one. The Soviet delegation suggests that for the purposes of the convention such key precursors be referred to as key components of binary chemical systems, since not all key precursors are suitable for that role in view of the particular thermodynamic requirements of a binary system.

During the negotiations some delegations suggest totally different régimes to be adopted for the very same chemicals. While for protective purposes supertoxic lethal chemicals could be produced only at a small-scale specialized facility in quantities up to one tonne per year and subject to the most stringent international control, their production for other permitted purposes would be allowed anywhere and in unlimited quantities. A convention based on such proposals, while eliminating the present industrial base for chemical-weapons production, could end up establishing all the prerequisites for the creation of a new, more advanced and sophisticated one. We cannot accept such a double standard for ensuring the non-production of chemical weapons. This must not be allowed. The Soviet delegation believes that a study of Finland's proposal on possible versions of the small-scale facility could be of some use in dealing with this issue.

Proposals from other delegations aimed at finding mutually acceptable solutions receive our careful consideration. This applies in particular to the proposals of France concerning the production of supertoxic lethal chemicals, classification of facilities and determination of their respective régimes, and solution of the binary weapons problem, as well as proposals by the delegation of China and by other delegations.

The elaboration of principles and arrangements for challenge inspection to clarify ambiguous situations has been and remains one of our most formidable tasks. No one is suggesting, as the United States delegation is trying to make it appear, that challenge inspection should not be conducted unless there is a proved violator