

(Mr. Vajnar, Czechoslovakia)

Two days before the Paris Conference, on 5 January, the Government of Czechoslovakia released a statement on issues concerning the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. This statement reaffirms that Czechoslovakia does not possess, manufacture or stockpile on its territory any chemical weapons. Nor does it own facilities for their development or production. All scientific research in this field is oriented exclusively towards protection against the effects of chemical weapons and other peaceful goals.

We are in favour of prevention of the further proliferation of chemical weapons. We are ready to contribute to this goal as far as we are able. With this objective in mind the Czechoslovak Government has adopted legislative measures providing for controls on the export of dual-purpose chemicals. I would like to stress in this connection that the only purpose of this measure is to contribute to the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. It is not discriminatory against any country. We also consider that it will not hinder international co-operation in the peaceful development of the chemical industry. The full text of the said statement is contained in Conference document CD/878.

The Paris Conference and its Final Declaration have already been welcomed here by practically all speakers taking the floor since the beginning of this session. We share the view that the Conference was an important political gathering confirming the validity of the Geneva Protocol while at the same time calling for the elaboration of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction at the earliest date, as the most reliable guarantee against the use of chemical weapons. Czechoslovakia regards that as a highly urgent task. It is argued by some that fixing deadlines is arbitrary, and not acceptable for disarmament negotiations. Perhaps this might be so if there is a total absence of specific negotiations on a subject covered by a suggested deadline. However, in the case of chemical weapons so much effort has already gone into the elaboration of the convention that the proposals for the time frames for its achievement advanced in Paris, as well as in this room recently, are not only quite realistic, but might also usefully remind us of the pledge we have all so solemnly subscribed to.

Paragraph 3 of the Final Declaration requests all States to make contributions to the negotiations in Geneva and to become parties to the convention as soon as it is concluded. As the Czechoslovak Government said in the statement mentioned above, we are prepared to be among the first States to accede to the chemical weapons convention. We regard the national inspection of a chemical industry facility we effected on 25 and 26 January 1989 in the town of Mnisek in central Bohemia as a contribution to the early finalization of the convention. The inspected facility is producing a schedule [3] chemical. The report on this inspection will be submitted soon.

We share the belief expressed by many representatives in our Conference, as well as at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, that measures of a regional nature could also make a significant contribution to the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. With this in view my country, together with the German Democratic Republic, proposed back in 1985 the creation of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. If established, in Europe as well as in other parts of the