

(Mr. González, Chile)

These words, uttered at the beginning of the 1990 session, are equally relevant as this session ends, and we consider that they can offer food for lengthy reflection by the delegations present here with next year's session in mind. In fact if we analyse the results achieved by the ad hoc committees in the past few months, we can easily reach the conclusion that apart from matters relating to chemical weapons, the remaining topics on the agenda, despite the efforts of many of their chairmen, were considered superficially and therefore progress has not been substantial, as this mandate of a negotiating body entitled us to expect. This is simply the logical outcome of the existence of working groups that do not have the essential negotiating mandate and therefore have to confine themselves to compiling statements and a variety of background material.

My delegation is very much aware of the need to give priority to work on chemical weapons and supports that decision, but it cannot go along with the idea of postponing all the other items in such a way as to convert this Conference into a preparatory conference for the chemical weapons convention. That is why we recognize the great value of the initiative recently submitted by Sweden in document CD/1089, containing a revised version of its own draft treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban, which had been submitted in 1983. We believe that that initiative is a useful and timely contribution which has come at a time when the Committee in question, like several others, is stagnating because of a lack of political will to deal with substantive matters. We would therefore venture to propose that among the measures studied annually by the Conference for improving its functioning, we should include next year the permanent establishment of the ad hoc committees with clear-cut and well-defined mandates, so that it is not necessary to devote long weeks each year to discussing how they should be re-established.