

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

Specifically on the issue of sanctions, my delegation last year advocated the provision of penalties for the violation of the convention. Notwithstanding the fact that the record of imposition of sanctions is mixed at best, its inclusion in the convention could enhance universal adherence. For a developing country like Nigeria, the creation of awareness that the use of chemical weapons would not be cost-free, through a commitment to sanctions by the States parties, would deter aggression by non-States parties.

The burden of creating a credible sanctions policy as a reprisal against the use of chemical weapons will no doubt fall on the executive council acting under appropriate supervision of the Security Council as outlined by Ambassador Elaraby of Egypt in his plenary statement on 8 August. My delegation is mindful of the difficult legal problem of trying to legitimize sanctions against non-States parties to the future convention. However, we regard them as measures that are indispensable for the undiminished security of States parties.

It would be exceedingly myopic to believe or think that the benefits of these articles will flow only to the States parties from the developing countries. As we are living in an interdependent world, all efforts must be made to ensure that the convention is as attractive as possible in order to attain the widest possible adherence.

Another unresolved key issue is verification, both routine and challenge, which remains very difficult. We must continue to address it very constructively, and with perseverance. We regard routine inspection as a purely technical exercise which should be left to the technical secretariat to conduct. Only this approach can guarantee a fair, equitable and non-discriminatory system. Challenge inspection is qualitatively different. Firstly, it is initiated by a State party. Secondly, it is intended to address some specific doubts and concerns. This aspect of the inspection, together with the special interest it is bound to generate among States parties, gives it a specifically political and therefore very sensitive character. It bears repeating that the image of a State party, the challenged State, will be at stake. Thus it can only be expected that after the organization has completed its inspection of the State party's facility, the same organization should make a categorical pronouncement on the State party's compliance or not, on the basis of the inspection report. It should be a collective exercise, from the beginning to the end, especially in view of its political nature. We trust that this important aspect of the issue and of course the level of intrusiveness or the role of the observer will continue to receive careful consideration.

History has repeatedly demonstrated the fact that we cannot really enforce or legislate morality. We all know that good intention is one thing and honest implementation is quite another irrespective of whether the selection of facilities for inspection is done by the technical secretariat or States parties.