

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

will best serve the basic purpose of the convention, namely, a total ban of chemical weapons in all their forms and methods of use. It is necessary, therefore, that the definition should include environmental warfare agents, including herbicides. Indonesia is a developing country whose economy depends primarily on agriculture. The use of such chemical agents would no doubt adversely affect our livelihood as well as the ecological balance.

Useful informal consultations have also been carried out on another element of the convention, namely, the element concerning destruction, diversion, dismantling and conversion. General understanding seems to be developing on various aspects of the element. It is not my intention, of course, to prejudge the report on these informal consultations yet to be made. I would simply like to reiterate the need to separate the obligation to destroy chemical weapons from the possibility of diversion for peaceful uses. It is also important to stress that international co-operation would be required for finding simple destruction methods to be used not only for destroying chemical warfare agents but also for destroying industrial wastes which have increasingly inflicted harmful effects on the environment, especially in developing countries.

It is generally agreed that any convention prohibiting chemical weapons will not achieve the desired effect if it does not contain adequate provisions on verification. We consider that the verification regime constitutes one of the most essential elements of the convention. It is our duty to elaborate a regime which will include a viable and effective verification system and mechanism. They should reflect a balance between national and international verification. The verification regime should also include a verification mechanism for every important stage of implementation of the obligations under the convention, including the verification of declarations of possession or non-possession of chemical weapons as well as the verification of non-use.

Finally, as time does not permit me to express my delegation's views on all the other elements of the convention, my delegation reserves its right to state its views on those elements if and when it deems it appropriate.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I take the floor today for personal -- yet relevant -- reasons. Our plenary meeting today is a nostalgic one for us all, for it is the last one which we shall share with our distinguished colleague and esteemed friend, Ambassador Venkateswaran, who now departs from our midst for new diplomatic vistas.

He represents a country noted for, among other things, gurus and has, in many respects, been a guru to us. Although he modestly shuns that title, Ambassador Venkateswaran has diligently sought to lead us toward worthy goals. He has injected into all of our deliberations, as well as in our personal and social contacts, that infinite wisdom usually associated with Indian gurus. Centuries of intellectual and cultural development form the well-spring of his sagacity. We have all been enriched by his contributions, and will be diminished by his departure. To his wisdom, he added the sparkle of his wit. A storyteller in the great tradition of his cultural heritage, he has enlivened our debates, as well as our social contacts. If I may compare him to a wellknown philosopher from my country, Ambassador Venkateswaran is India's diplomatic answer to Will Rogers -- a man with a rare gift of relating truth and wisdom through humour. Indeed, the loss of his humour will leave us a more sombre and unleavened body.