

(Mr. Sene, Senegal)

Among the urgent pending problems which were emphasized at the third special session, there is first of all the need to draw up a convention containing a universal and global ban on chemical weapons. Consequently, one of the Conference on Disarmament's priority tasks is to advance resolutely towards an agreement for the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. Particularly since alarming reports on the use of chemical weapons and their proliferation have now confirmed the urgent need for maximum possible efforts in this field in order to finalize the draft convention. Hence discussions should be continued on the various parts of the convention text, tackling in turn, for instance, the question of the destruction of chemical weapons, challenge inspections, multilateral assistance, economic and technological development as well as the final clauses. However, clarification of the problem of non-production and the multilateral exchange of data on that subject, along with trial inspections, could make it possible to put in place operational procedures for the verification régimes. In other words, we must agree on a sufficiently well-developed system to ensure the non-production of chemical weapons in future by elaborating mandatory inspection machinery backed up by challenge inspections. If necessary we could even contemplate setting up an international body to monitor the provisions of the convention so as to increase its transparency - but these are all just working hypotheses.

In the mean time chemical weapons continue to be manufactured and, moreover, it appears that techniques and chemical warfare agents are more and more sophisticated, with the risk that they will be used, though as we know their proliferation presents mankind with an ever greater threat. Hence the need to ensure the participation and solidarity of all States in the international community to ensure the full application of a convention on chemical weapons. In this way it will be possible to make the substance of the commitments that are to be entered into more acceptable and to awaken the interest of all States in order to prepare the ground for universal accession to the convention. In this connection my delegation supports the Yugoslav proposal for a special United Nations conference in due course to adopt the convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The conclusion of such a convention would assuredly be an undoubted triumph for multilateral diplomacy in the area of disarmament, and specifically for our negotiating body and all the delegations participating in the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Secondly, the participants in the third special session of the General Assembly on disarmament also recalled that, in connection with the Final Document of the Second Review Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, States have made statements that they do not possess any of the toxic agents, weapons, equipment or means of delivery listed in their article I of the Convention. Of course, even if as a matter of principle the validity of