

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt)

Turning now to the item on chemical weapons, on which a good measure of progress has been made in reaching agreement on specific elements and detailed formulations for incorporation in a treaty on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction, we believe that the early conclusions of such a treaty has become an imperative and urgent matter in view of all the developments presaging a stepping up of the production of chemical weapons, a situation which would create additional difficulties if a speedy conclusion of the treaty is not forthcoming. Today we are at a critical turning point. Consequently, this Committee should gear all its efforts towards the finalization of a treaty on chemical weapons, taking advantage of the progress made last year in the Ad Hoc Working Group under the leadership of Ambassador Lidgard.

Only a few months lie ahead of us before the beginning of the second special session of the General Assembly. We are therefore working under the pressure of time to finalize consideration of certain issues before this deadline. Foremost among them is the comprehensive programme of disarmament, which hopefully will be finally agreed and formulated before the end of this session in April. The Ad Hoc Working Group on this subject has made considerable progress in exploring the various elements to be included in the programme. What remains is to reach agreement on some of the key issues, in particular those relating to "measures", the nature of the programme, and the time-frame for its implementation.

In addition to the CPD, which we hope will be finalized by the end of our current session, should we not also endeavour to finalize agreement on some other matters under consideration in order to submit the results to the second special session?

In this regard, one of the most important aspects is to reach agreement on a clear and categorical commitment whereby the nuclear-weapon States undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States. At the first special session, the nuclear-weapon States issued their unilateral declarations. However, it is now generally recognized that these declarations are not sufficient and do not offer sufficient assurances. If we can, in this Committee, on the basis of the discussions which took place in the relevant Ad Hoc Working Group, the plenary Committee itself and the General Assembly, reach an agreement whereby the nuclear-weapon States commit themselves, clearly and unequivocally, to renouncing the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States, then we will be able to claim a first significant achievement. Moreover, such a development will answer the legitimate demand of the non-nuclear-weapon States, the majority of which have voluntarily renounced the nuclear option within a treaty framework and have subjected their nuclear installations to international inspection and verification procedures.

In addition, we believe that we have to pursue efforts to conclude a treaty prohibiting the production and use of radiological weapons. Although such a convention is not an urgent priority on the disarmament agenda, its conclusion, in our view, would be a contribution to our efforts to prevent the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction. My delegation considers it essential