

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Scope of the prohibition. Here we believe it is particularly important that the future convention should include a prohibition of weapons with binary or multi-component charges, as referred to in paragraph (b) of the definition of chemical weapons under section I of the Soviet draft. We attach particular importance to this matter as we consider that the appearance of binary chemical weapons will represent a qualitatively new stage in the chemical arms race, a stage which could vitally affect the entire prospect for the prohibition of this type of weapon. We have talked about this a number of times already, and our views are shared by many other delegations. These views were confirmed, moreover, by the consultations with technical experts, which made it clear that by contrast with the production of supertoxic weapons in factory conditions, in which the traditional types of such weapons are manufactured on the basis, as a rule, of the same chemicals of known composition, in the development of binary systems of chemical weapons their production may involve new chemicals of various classes and in a wide variety of combinations. The uncertainty from the standpoint of the detection of compliance or non-compliance with the convention becomes many times greater as a result of the possibility of the appearance in the future of various kinds of binary weapons in addition to supertoxic lethal systems. Furthermore, binary systems of chemical weapons make it difficult to monitor their production and stockpiling by groups of States belonging to military blocs. Some members of a bloc may in the future be parties to the convention while others may not, and the provisions of the convention would thus not apply to the latter.

It is obvious that the development of the production of any type of binary weapon will bring new generations of chemicals into the range of chemical substances capable of being used as the components of such weapons, and States parties to the convention will be confronted with the extremely difficult problem of how to set a limit distinguishing chemicals for commercial purposes from chemicals which could -- and I repeat could -- be used in binary systems of chemical weapons. It cannot be excluded that this problem might arise in connection with other substances in addition to organophosphorus compounds.

It must also be pointed out that the components used in binary systems constitute a special kind of precursors. They differ from the precursors used in industrial conditions chiefly in that they are not simply the raw materials for obtaining lethal chemicals but practically already prepared chemical weapons when they are in combination with special devices or constructions.

Thus, it must be recognized that binary varieties of chemical weapons based on the latest advances in science and technology represent an incomparably more serious danger and create incomparably greater difficulties in the determination of the scope of the prohibition as well as in the monitoring of compliance with that prohibition, than do so-called unitary chemical weapons.

It is obvious that there is no way around these problems and the only thing to do is to tackle the solution of them in a serious manner. What kind of a convention would it be if it were to deal only with obsolescent types of chemical weapons that are being removed from arsenals and ignored the more modern types of such weapons which are