

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

Committee. As delegates recall the Ad Hoc Committee is entrusted with a negotiating mandate. I have got a feeling that the word "negotiations" has been subject to very different interpretations and also, I regret to say, to some confusion.

The Conference on Disarmament is based upon the important principle of equality between all its 40 members. Gone is the time when two co-chairmen's delegations provided the multilateral body with their joint draft proposals. Now the Committee must generate the substance for negotiations through using the dossier which has been accumulated during the work process in the Conference. The negotiating approach has so far been to start by using available basic material from the elaborations during earlier years. The Chairman and those other delegates undertaking the task to assist him in his work, must base themselves on this material, when providing delegations with written proposals to be negotiated upon. In order to avoid futile polemics and controversy, the Chairman should see to it that any proposal put to the full membership for consideration, has been prepared in consultation with delegations which in accordance with the Chairman's perception could have a special interest or an articulated attitude to the proposal in question. The Chairman should, of course, always be available to all Members of the Conference wishing to see him on any of the subjects under consideration. Thus, preparatory consultations would assist the Chairman in his evaluation of the prospect for success of a proposal. Such a procedure would also make it possible to modify and tailor proposals in a way that would enhance the possibilities to make the proposals acceptable to the membership as a whole. This approach is a necessary one for the Committee to be able to successfully cope with the complexity of a chemical weapons convention.

It should be generally recognized that preparatory consultations, also in a limited scale, are integrated and necessary elements of the negotiating process of the multilateral negotiating body. The multilateral negotiations on chemical weapons would have a chance of success if delegations could thus actively participate in the negotiating process, not only by restating their views but also by participating in the search for solutions to the many formidable problems still remaining to be solved.

The whole process from identifying the base material, through consultations in different configurations to joint drafting of provisions of a future convention, thus contains integrated elements in the negotiation on a future Chemical Weapons Convention. It is essential that delegations recognize the importance and the indispensability of all those stages in the process. The Conference undertook one of the most complicated international negotiations when it set itself the task of creating a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. It is crucial not only for the success of the negotiations on chemical weapons but for the future of all multilateral disarmament negotiations that all delegations join in mutually shaping working procedures and negotiating methods that will demonstrate the effectiveness and political fairness of the multilateral approach to disarmament negotiations.