

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

use should take effect at the same time as the convention comes into force. To a great extent, solutions to these problems are already available. What is needed is the political will, the commitment and the courage to really negotiate, to make choices, and to compromise.

The greater momentum of the bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1989 is a good sign. The Committee has benefited from some of the results. Furthermore, one sign of good intentions is the bilateral memorandum of understanding regarding the exchange of data, confidence-building visits and ultimately inspections prior to the signature of the convention. It is disappointing, however, that the bilateral agreement on the order of destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities, confirmed and announced at the meeting at foreign minister level in Wyoming in September, has not yet been communicated to the Conference on Disarmament.

It seems that the delay is due to the emergency of potentially crippling reservations, which would allow certain States to retain chemical warfare agents until - in their unilateral judgement - all States capable of making chemical weapons subscribe to the convention.

Sweden fully shares the concern about ensuring global adhesion to the chemical weapons convention. However, reservations of this type risk doing the opposite by leaving a glaring loophole in the régime, thereby providing an excuse for other countries to retain - or to acquire - chemical weapons as well. In the Swedish Government's view, it is of vital importance that all States wishing to participate in the negotiations should be allowed to do so in accordance with the 1989 Paris Declaration.

1990 will be a crucial year in the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. A definite breakthrough must now come.