

We do not underestimate the technical complexities of ASAT arms control and its adequate verification. These factors indeed complicate things. They should not however discourage us from vigorously seeking practical and pragmatic solutions. An agreement which comprehensively bans all means of anti-satellite warfare appears to be impossible. Residual ASAT capacities of certain space systems are amongst the main obstacles. We have to look for a combination of verifiable and co-operative elements in a future agreement, which would prevent anti-satellite warfare from any longer being an effective military option. In the view of the Netherlands, negotiated constraints on ASAT would be greatly preferable to a totally unrestrained ASAT competition.

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I would like to thank, as a number of other colleagues did earlier, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ekeus, as well as the Chairmen of the Working Groups who, in organizing numerous meetings and informal consultations, spare no efforts to achieve as much progress as possible. It seems at the moment that if the Committee could agree on the most important questions regarding the destruction of stockpiles and on the verification of this process, together with the procedure on submission of the initial and detailed plans for destruction, then the question of how and what to do with the facilities would also be easier to solve. Let me say that an understanding on the questions mentioned above would make it possible to establish the main trunk of the future convention. The Polish delegation persistently works towards this end. Of extreme importance at the present stage would be the elaboration of guidelines for initial plans for destruction. Based on such agreed guidelines, the States signatories of the future convention who are in possession of chemical weapons could, after its entry into force, agree between themselves the detailed contents of such plans and submit them to the Consultative Committee. Any action in this respect at present would enhance an outlook on the whole process of destruction and verification. In other words, we consider that further work in this field will be both prospective and useful in all respects.

I would like to devote also a few lines to the question of the diversion of stocks. As is well known, different misunderstandings or lack of understanding concerning this problem have impeded progress of negotiations. We note therefore with satisfaction that a considerable degree of mutual understanding is emerging. It was especially encouraging to hear in this connection that the United States delegation would show flexibility to consider any proposals in this respect. All of us should have in mind that regardless of destruction or diversion, both these kinds of elimination of chemical weapons will have to be exactly reflected in future plans of destruction which the States parties concerned will have to submit at the mutually agreed time to the Consultative Committee. Thus the problem as such will be in full sight of all participants to the convention.

It is obvious that the diversion process will have to be adequately controlled.

Let me say also a few words on the forms of verification, particularly in the context of the United States draft convention contained in document CD/500. As I observed in my intervention on 15 March this year, no verification, however intensive and elaborate, can provide absolute certainty that no violation, even the least meaningful, occurs. The United States draft contains and proposes the widest and most demanding system of verification. Has it been justified by a real need or by an excessive care for the obligations to be fulfilled by future signatories of the convention? I shall try to make a short analysis of different requirements for the verification systems. Out of numerous requirements, the following could be mentioned:

- first, correspondence of the verification system with international law and with