

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

It would of course be wrong to feel satisfied with our work. A number of difficult problems still remain to be solved, including some major aspects of our convention. Verification remains the top priority, where much has been achieved but much more remains to be done particularly as regards challenge and ad hoc inspection. The rate of progress in our negotiations sometimes seems too slow. But we are steadily increasing the areas of convergence of view.

We must sustain our efforts. The inter-sessionals should enable us to develop further a number of the items on which we have worked over the past year so that they can be brought into appendix I or II. To achieve this we shall have to focus our attention on those matters which hold out most promise of early agreement. We welcome the proposals on this given us by the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. We now all have a basis for work in our capitals during the coming weeks so that we can return to the inter-sessionals well prepared.

We hope that we shall come to these inter-sessionals further strengthened by a positive outcome to the bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as to the Government/Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons in Canberra.

An encouraging aspect of this year's session has been the increased involvement in the negotiations by representatives of States not members of the Conference on Disarmament. Their presence here has given our work a wider perspective. We believe that, as called for in the Paris Declaration, all States should be free to participate in the negotiations as observers if they wish. I look forward to the participation of still larger numbers of such States.

We all owe a great deal to our Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Morel, for the leadership he has given - for his energy, his enthusiasm, and his diplomatic and negotiating skills. My delegation much appreciates the very considerable contribution he has made. Our thanks go also to the hard-working chairmen of the working groups: Mr. Lüdeking of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Gomaa of Egypt, Mr. Sood of India, Mr. Molander of Sweden and Dr. Krutzsch of the German Democratic Republic; as well as to Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden and Dr. Rautio of Finland for their work as chairmen of their special groups. We have learned with great pleasure that Ambassador Hyltenius is to be the next Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, and we much look forward to working closely with him. My thanks also go to the secretariat for all their dedicated hard labour. Certainly the report we have just adopted would not have been possible without them. And lastly, three distinguished ambassadors are leaving us very soon, Ambassador van Schaik of the Netherlands, Ambassador Yamada of Japan and Ambassador Fan of China - all three much respected colleagues whom we shall miss, and I should like to offer them my best wishes for the future.