

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The objectives of strengthening European security would also be enhanced by a measure such as the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free corridor in central Europe, and the Soviet Union supports the appeal addressed by the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia to the Federal Republic of Germany on the subject, and would be ready to withdraw on a reciprocal basis all its nuclear systems from such a corridor and guarantee its status. The implementation of the proposals by Bulgaria, Romania and Greece on a nuclear and chemical weapon-free zone in the Balkans would be of great importance.

We believe that in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons the necessary prerequisites have been created to allow us this very year to find solutions to outstanding issues and to draw up an international convention on the subject.

The Soviet Union regards the speedy finalization of negotiations on a general and complete ban on chemical weapons as one of the main objectives of its foreign policy. On this basis, the Soviet Union has recently presented a number of important major initiatives with a view to establishing the necessary conditions to accelerate and intensify negotiations on the convention.

In his Prague statement, General Secretary Gorbachev announced new practical steps on the part of my country in this direction. The Soviet Union has ceased production of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union does not have any chemical weapons outside its borders. Construction of a special facility for the destruction of chemical-weapon stocks has begun in the Soviet Union. The commissioning of this facility will allow the rapid implementation of the process of chemical disarmament once the international convention was concluded. Here I would like to thank the distinguished representative of Romania, Ambassador Dolgu, for the high appreciation he expressed today of the steps we have taken.

In making such steps, the Soviet Union proceeds from the firm assumption that the chemical weapons convention will be ready for signature in 1987. This, naturally, requires that States must begin now to take practical measures to prepare for the implementation of the obligation they will take upon themselves as parties to the future convention.

As with other measures for real disarmament, the Soviet Union is seeking to establish the most stringent system of verification, including international verification, regarding the elimination of chemical weapons and the industrial base for their manufacture. On the basis of such an approach, we are prepared to look for mutually acceptable solutions to questions related to compliance with the convention by all parties and to confidence-building among them. I note with satisfaction the positive attitude of the United Kingdom towards our steps in the area of effective verification of compliance with the future convention.

I wish to emphasize once again that the Soviet Union, which is consistently in favour of the speedy elaboration of the convention this very year, will continue to do its utmost to achieve decisive progress towards