

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

one of his highest priorities. Sweden welcomes the fact that there now exists a consensus regarding an effective ban on production under international control as of the entry into force of the convention, and regarding effective international control of all chemical weapons stocks as of the same date. The announcement by France on this latter issue opens the door to the rapid conclusion of the negotiations regarding articles IV and V. The Soviet Union and the United States should now present to the CD their detailed proposals for the destruction of chemical weapons stocks and chemical weapons production facilities.

Sweden is encouraged by the fact that 16 countries have so far engaged in trial inspections of the chemical industry. We would, however, prefer that even more countries, in all groups, performed such inspections. The lessons to be drawn from the common evaluation of the trial inspections, which we have to undertake this year, will directly influence our final agreement on the verification of non-production in article VI. Sweden also welcomes the recent proposals made by the Soviet Union on article VI and by the United Kingdom on article X. Both proposals demonstrate a constructive and flexible approach to the negotiations and could serve as a basis for agreement on the two issues at hand. It is our hope that initiatives like these will be forthcoming at a rapid pace, and that such efforts to find compromise language will be recognized by other delegations. Our work must become more results-oriented. Opportunities for agreement must be seized.

The importance of the successful conclusion of a chemical weapons convention cannot be overstated. It would radically improve the security of all States. It would once and for all eliminate a whole class of existing weapons of mass destruction. It would be the first multilateral disarmament treaty embodying the principle of international challenge inspections without the right of refusal. It would constitute a major break-through for the very principle of multilateral disarmament.

However, in our work to reach agreement, we are racing against time. The further refinement, development and spread of chemical weapons seriously undermine our efforts. But the solution is within reach. If there is political will - if we are all prepared to translate our declarations into political action - the comprehensive chemical weapons ban can be ready in 1990 or maybe even earlier.