

(Mr. Hansen, United States)

alternative to access. And any alternative measure which may warrant consideration must not be used to delay the conduct of an inspection.

In this connection, I would note that general opinion now favours the immediate dispatch of an inspection team to the site to be inspected at the time the challenge inspection request is made. My delegation will also give this recent development its close attention. Similarly, we note a growing trend not to insert any institutional involvement between the inspection request and the conduct of an inspection. The United States position is that a fact-finding panel to deal with the possibility of frivolous inspection requests is necessary, but if the Conference moves toward having no filter at all between the request and the inspection, we shall also give this issue careful study.

No difficulty exists in agreeing with the basic premise voiced by the Soviet delegation on 16 April to the effect that there is a requirement for complete equality of obligation among the States parties to an agreement. I assume that all participants here share that view. The 3 April 1986 amendment to document CD/500 introduced by the United States delegation was intended to reaffirm this principle.

Finally, the negotiations on a convention banning chemical weapons on a global scale cannot be reduced to a single issue nor to the concerns of just a few States. If it were so, we might have reached agreement long ago. But each Government represented here must carefully analyse each new idea and determine the manner in which it harmonizes with the policies, principles and national security interests of that Government. We must never forget that the overriding objective is an effective and comprehensive convention which promises greater security for all. The objective can never be just reaching an agreement.

With that thought, I wish to return to where I began. Important events are occurring both within and outside the Conference on Disarmament. The United States will work hard both within and without this forum to promote equitable, verifiable and stabilizing arms reduction agreements. This was the intent of Secretary Shultz's visit to Moscow, which the United States considers to have shown that an agreement on intermediate nuclear force reductions may be possible in the not-too-distant future. This will, of course, still require much consultation and a lot of hard work.

The same holds true for our work in this Conference on Disarmament. The United States delegation sees substantial progress in defining and resolving issues, especially as they relate to the convention on banning chemical weapons, but a lot of hard work remains.