

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

solutions let us not lose track of current events. The war in the Gulf reminds us that the problem of chemical warfare is an awesome possibility, and that every effort must now be made to bring our work to an early conclusion. It is more important and urgent than ever.

I wish the incoming Chairman, Ambassador Serguei Batsanov, every success. He had the competence, vision and determination required for the responsible task of guiding these negotiations.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on behalf of my delegation on taking up the high office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. We are sure that under your competent and dynamic leadership the CD's activities for this year will get under way smoothly and efficiently. Let me assure you that the Netherlands delegation will make every effort to assist you in making your present stewardship effective and stimulating.

Most of our thoughts are directed nowadays towards the war in the Gulf, and rightly so. The Netherlands is taking an active share in the task of ensuring compliance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. As we are all aware, a dramatic dimension is looming over this war. I refer to the implicit and explicit threats which we have heard to use chemical weapons in that conflict. Needless to say, such threats cannot but compel us to achieve the most important objective on our agenda: an effective convention banning all chemical weapons once and for all. A convention worthy of our confidence to ensure that the scourge of chemical warfare is effectively removed from every region in the world. A convention of which we can be sure that it will be faithfully implemented and complied with everywhere, and which will not be considered by some as just another scrap of paper to be ignored. One of the tools which should give rise to confidence in complete implementation of the convention is a régime to trigger international inspections on request any time, anywhere, based on effective procedures to identify serious violations. Only such a régime will deter potential violators. We have already worked out some procedures for such inspections. We must test them in practice. And we must improve and complete them.

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