

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

views before us, we are profoundly convinced that there is no alternative to the drawing up of a universal and effective legal instrument so that anyone seeking to violate the rule will have to pay a very high price.

I should like to make a few observations concerning our work on chemical weapons. There is no doubt that our fundamental task is to devise global, effective and comprehensive verification machinery. Where chemical weapons are concerned, verification is particularly complex and restrictive in order to furnish a reasonable assurance of compliance with the commitments entered into, as well as sufficiently dependable dissuasion. The verification procedures which must cover all violations cannot of course offer complete guarantees, but must be sufficient to create and maintain mutual trust. That leads one to the conclusion that the convention must in this regard include a network of diversified and independent measures which, without making the system excessively complicated, can, by complementing and even backing up one another, lead us to the objective sought.

Combinations of different systems are also necessary as a result of the fact that there is no single solution to the problem of a concentration of risks of violations. No activity can be ignored - certainly not facilities which, in technical terms, present the greatest danger of production of toxic agents, and should therefore be inspected regularly. Verification should, in fact, be dissuasive and should be designed to discourage violations by making the risks greater than the benefits that a country could hope to obtain.

Challenge inspection is a necessary and important element, and for that reason we welcome its acceptance by the Soviet Union and other States which still had reservations about this system of inspection until recently. Nevertheless, we share the feeling expressed by other countries that it is, if not vital, then at least very important to secure the co-operation and good will of our manufacturers, who will have to bear the burden, not to say the risks, of verification. To that end we think it is essential to place in the text of the convention, I would even say in an exhaustive manner, provisions that will reassure industry as to recognition by the States parties of the need not to harm its interests, either technologically, financially or commercially.

I should like to address another aspect of the convention which is of great importance for a country like ours, which has a relatively extensive and varied chemical industry and accordingly will be among the States likely to be subject to frequent verification exercises. I have in mind the institutional aspect of our future Organization. A general consensus already exists concerning the structure and major areas of operation of the international organization. However, political agreement has yet to be found on certain points, notably the composition of the Executive Council. Each State must have a reasonable chance of joining the Council. The Executive Council cannot, in our view, become a "club of inspected States", but we consider nevertheless that a certain proportion of the seats on the Executive Council should be designated on the basis of a list of States with a large chemical industry. The other members of the Executive Council might be designated on the basis of criteria to be agreed in the future. In this context, I wish to reiterate my country's offer of Brussels as host city for the headquarters of