

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

it is quite possible to arrive in a reasonable time frame at a convention that would eliminate the danger of these weapons and strengthen the security of all States and, in addition, would not indirectly create situations of inequality or discrimination that may arise as a result of different levels of development.

In this area it is always essential to highlight the importance of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, better known as the Geneva Protocol of 1925, as this was the first instrument to prohibit the use of a type of weapon of mass destruction. None the less we should recognize that as a result of the situation created by the right of retaliation, the Protocol has become essentially a "no first use" agreement, and the fact that it is being flouted at present should lead us to think seriously about the convention that is being negotiated in this Conference. Almost half a century went by before the conclusion of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons, which marked the first step towards the elimination of a whole category of weapons. This was the first measure containing a genuine disarmament element, not only because it prohibited the development and production of these weapons, but also because it provided for the destruction of stockpiles that then existed. The convention that we are negotiating should complete the process initiated through the 1925 Protocol and the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention with a view to prohibiting this type of weapon of mass destruction fully and without delay.

The chemical weapons convention as we have known it so far would be a non-discriminatory treaty, since all the parties would be on an equal footing once the process of destruction of chemical weapons and existing production facilities had been completed. At that stage the treaty will serve as a model, because it will be unlike the non-proliferation Treaty, which lays down in law the existence of two categories of States: those that possess nuclear weapons and those that do not. In the future convention there will be a single category of States with the same rights and obligations, and an identical verification mechanism applicable for all States, and it will not be a means of allocating world power, like the non-proliferation Treaty, but an instrument with an egalitarian purpose within the international community. Thus we have within reach the possibility of drawing up a treaty that would not be discriminatory from the political and military standpoints. It is also important, that it should not be discriminatory from an economic and technological viewpoint. In this regard the future convention should not be devised in such a way as to allow for its use to maintain inequalities in the field of trade or technology or to prevent the development or transfer of chemicals, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

During the course of the negotiations, we have noted that time and again the need has emerged to reconcile three legitimate interests of States: Firstly, that of completely eliminating the possibility of the threat of chemical warfare; secondly, that of guaranteeing that a State's security would not be undermined; and, thirdly, that of ensuring unimpeded development of chemical activities for peaceful purposes. Clearly, a strict monitoring régime would offer greater safeguards, but it could affect the development of