

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

We are appreciative of the fact that substantive and extensive negotiations for a convention prohibiting chemical weapons were conducted in the Ad Hoc Committee during 1985, through which the structure of the future convention and its major elements were developed in treaty language, with, however, many reservations. The deliberations were reinforced through inter-sessional meetings. I would like to congratulate the outgoing Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Turbanski, for his achievements as well as to welcome the incoming Chairman, Ambassador Cromartie.

At this point, I should like to recall that the objective of our negotiations is a "comprehensive ban on chemical weapons". Therefore, a partial or regional approach cannot be accepted as an alternative to our negotiations.

Additionally the "comprehensive ban" is of course not the same thing as a complete prohibition of all related substances and activities. Existing chemical weapons should be destroyed at an early stage, with due consideration being given to the need for undiminished security for all States. There should be no question about that, and similarly, particularly serious and careful attention should be paid to the questions concerning some other issues.

For example, if we look at the world, there are those countries which have a very extensively developed and comprehensive system of material chemical industries, there are those where only limited kinds and volume of chemicals are produced, those which engage extensive export-import of chemicals, and finally purely consumer nations. Since in talking about a chemical-weapon convention, we are in fact touching upon the extensive outer reaches of the modern, complex and ever-advancing chemical industries, it is useful and indeed very important to give due consideration to different concerns arising out of different conditions in different countries.

We should also keep in mind that the negotiations have become, in a certain respect, so complicated that it is rapidly becoming an issue surpassing the comprehension of the average bystander. In order for the future convention to receive the necessary wide support, we should always keep in mind that its basic logic should be straightforward and readily understandable. In our future negotiations, it is imperative that we should take the positions of various countries well into consideration so as to develop a convention which will be convincing and realistic.

This year's negotiations will be conducted on the basis of the results of last year's work, and we consider that the work conducted in January, where attention was concentrated on specific substances was useful in pointing the way towards a realistic approach to the issues of definition and permitted activities. At the same time, we feel it necessary to point out that future discussions should consider specific substances and the regulatory régimes concerned so as to keep an overall picture clearly in our mind.

In this connection, I should like to mention some of the obvious problems in the wish to find just solutions.

First, if we were to list those substances to be prohibited from among those now identified, we shall wind up leaving new technological developments unregulated.