

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

papers, which get down to the real detail that is necessary at this stage of our work. We have also seen agreement on a useful substantive record of the present state of our negotiations. My delegation believes that annex 1 to the Working Group's report sets out clearly the position on many of the substantive provisions that will be needed in a chemical weapons convention, and that it will enable Governments to analyse in depth the areas where an effort to achieve solutions is now required. We can see the shape of a convention emerging and we have an outline for our future work. I should also like, Mr. Chairman, to thank the hard-working co-ordinators of the contact groups for their efforts; the detailed descriptions contained in their reports of common views and of differences of opinion will need to be considered carefully, with the main report of the Working Group, in the preparations to be made for next session.

Mr. Chairman, before going on to review the more positive aspects of our work this session on chemical weapons, I must express a certain disappointment that attempts to come to grips with some key issues of the Convention, and in particular the important area of the destruction of stockpiles, have not met with an adequate response from all members of the Committee. My delegation welcomed the tabling of document CD/387, which offers a practical model of a verification system for the destruction of stockpiles. We hoped that this would provoke a full discussion of all aspects of this important issue. We were therefore disappointed that Contact Group A of the Chemical Weapons Working Group did not make a serious effort to deal with this key issue, but instead spent much of its time examining in depth rather minor points of the Convention, such as the question of the transfer of stockpiles to another State for the purpose of destruction.

Fortunately, Mr. Chairman, in the other Contact Groups more substantive work was done on the central issues with which the Groups were entrusted. My delegation particularly welcomed the elaboration in Contact Group B of fact-finding procedures for use in connection with verification by challenge, together with the further work on the related issue of the structure of a consultative committee. Challenge inspection and fact-finding procedures are clearly vital elements of the verification regime of the chemical weapons convention. They are the safety-net which will allow States to call for international investigation of any problems which they have with any aspect of the convention. We look forward to further work in this area next year.

Interesting ideas also emerged from the work on the question of use of chemical weapons in Contact Group C. We welcome the clear statement which has now been made that all delegations can accept that the convention should ensure that the use of chemical weapons is banned. We are grateful to Mr. Akkerman for his tireless efforts to find a way of expressing this underlying agreement, which will not weaken the Geneva Protocol. This is, indeed, my delegation's own major preoccupation when examining the question of including use in a chemical weapons convention. We are concerned that during the first 10 years of the life of the Convention, when stockpiles are being run down and destroyed, obligations undertaken by States under the existing regime, under the Geneva Protocol, should be preserved and should be extended to States parties to the new convention, which are not parties to the Geneva Protocol. After the 10-year period, when everyone is satisfied that chemical weapons stocks have been destroyed, we would then wish to see all States parties to the new convention subject to an obligation not to use chemical weapons in any armed conflict in any circumstances, regardless of whether they are parties to the Geneva Protocol. We believe that the work of Contact Group C has tried to address this problem, and we hope that all delegations will consider carefully during the