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preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons." It is our understanding that this latter initiative is not intended in any way to divert efforts from the priority need to conclude a comprehensive chemical weapons ban; so too with respect to the statement contained in the proposals most recently made by Secretary-General Gorbachev raising the possibility of "certain interim steps," possibly involving multilateral agreement on matters relating to the non-transfer of chemical weapons. As others have pointed out, and indeed my delegation has in the past, it will be of limited utility if we get an effective bilateral convention which is not a comprehensive convention in both senses in extending to all the main issues under negotiation and in comprising a genuine non-proliferation convention.

Despite the considerable progress which has been made, there remain several difficult issues to be resolved if a chemical weapons ban is to be concluded. Among these, the verification provisions of the treaty will require especially serious and dispassionate effort if agreement is to be achieved. It will be recalled that, in April 1984, almost two years ago, the Vice-President of the United States of America tabled in this forum a draft treaty text which is the most comprehensive proposal yet before us setting out in detail the kind of verification regime his government prefers and would regard as adequate. Canada has indicated its readiness in principle to accept and apply the kinds of verification provisions contained in the US text. However, while there has been much criticism of these proposals, no delegation has thus far come forward with concrete, substantive alternative comprehensive proposals which would delineate with clarity the area of common ground and the areas of disagreement, thus providing a basis for serious negotiation with a view to arriving at verification provisions which would be acceptable to all.

The Canadian government noted, and welcomed, the reaffirmation by the US spokesman in the first committee of the UN General Assembly on October 31, 1985 that "No imbalance in inspection obligations is either desired, intended or contained in any provisions of the United States draft convention banning chemical weapons." The Canadian government has also noted with particular care and interest the recent statement by Secretary-General Gorbachev that, with reference to declarations of the location of chemical weapons production facilities, the cessation of production, the destruction of production facilities and the destruction of chemical weapons stocks, "All these measures would be carried out under strict control including international on-site inspections." We are greatly encouraged by this statement. We hope that during the present session of this conference the delegation of the USSR will be in a position to further elaborate on its precise meaning. The task of seriously negotiating effective, operable and politically acceptable verification provisions for a chemical weapons treaty will be difficult and time-consuming. However, it should not be postponed any longer.

During this session, the Canadian delegation intends to continue to make substantive inputs to the negotiation of a chemical weapons ban. We will be submitting a *Handbook for the Investigation of Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons*. The *Handbook* identifies procedures, equipment and standard formats which would go a long way toward ensuring that the findings of an investigation of alleged chemical weapons use would be as conclusive, convincing and impartial as possible. It reflects Canadian experience and expertise and our longstanding interest in various aspects of verification. It should be of particular value in relation to the provisions of a chemical weapons treaty dealing with a verifiable ban on chemical weapons use, as is being negotiated in this forum. We will also be submitting a technical working paper dealing with identification of chemical substances. We will be making