

(Mr. Bottai, Italy)

Italy is ready, with an open mind, for the final effort aimed at shaping the real identity of the convention which, although comprising the fruit of differing perceptions of security, will also encompass several essential common points at the heart of the CW ban. In order not to be born outdated, the convention will have to reflect a minimal relinquishment of national sovereignty for the sake of collectively shared interests. It would be extremely disappointing, after so many years of negotiations, if the convention were to be signed by only a group of like-minded States: this is certainly not what all of us had in mind - nor, I believe, France, in its welcome offer to host a conference in Paris before the end of the year for the signature of the convention, with universality as one of its essential targets.

I should like to conclude by expressing Italy's complete confidence in the future role of the Conference on Disarmament. As in the past, it will have to adapt itself to new challenges even in its very structure without binding itself to any predetermined "magic" numbers for its composition, beyond which the realm of effectiveness would be lost. Important countries, both within and outside Europe, are awaiting the opportunity to make their positive contribution as full members of the CD. The revision of the competences of the CD will also have to be addressed as soon as possible after the conclusion of the negotiations on the CW ban. In the meantime, this body is already at grips with a new item related to the subject of transparency in armaments. I should like to confirm that it is Italy's sincere expectation that the consideration of this issue will be started without further delay, following the specific request formulated by the United Nations General Assembly. As a follow-on to the seminar held in Florence in 1990, a new opportunity for addressing the problem of arms transfers in an informal framework will be offered by Italy in the same town early next autumn, under the auspices of the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, in order to examine the issue in a regional perspective. Arms transfers constitute only the first of a number of interrelated and interdependent problems, which could be seen by the CD, to the benefit of everyone, in a comprehensive and balanced way, such as conversion, non-proliferation, production, promotion of technological cooperation and the interrelationship between disarmament on a regional and on a global scale.