

The PRESIDENT (translated from French):

... Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, I have the pleasure, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, to welcome most warmly the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, His Excellency Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who is our first speaker today.

I should like to express to His Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor, our gratitude for the interest with which he follows our work. Since 3 February 1983, he has visited us repeatedly to present the views of his Government on vital disarmament issues and, in particular, to invite us to step up negotiations for the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. I should also like to thank His Excellency, the Vice-Chancellor, for having kindly agreed to address the Conference at a turning-point, when negotiations on these weapons, we all hope, are to lead to a convention this year. I am convinced that the contribution of Germany will be decisive in achieving this goal. The commitment and effectiveness shown by the German delegation in its chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons also are proof of the importance of Germany's participation in the negotiating process in the Conference.

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(The President)

... The international community is thus justified in expecting a great deal from this Conference. No effort should be spared to limit, and regulate the production and export of the latest arms and equipment, whatever they may be - nuclear or conventional, chemical or bacteriological, radiological or space weapons. It is fortunate that the Conference has now reached the stage of negotiations on a multilateral convention on chemical weapons.