

(Mr. Lowitz, United States)

that were not subject to varying interpretation. The United States view has been that efforts should focus on the lists themselves, rather than on abstract and imprecise criteria. However, in an effort to meet the concerns expressed by the Soviet Union, the United States is willing to work in parallel on guidelines for the lists and on the lists themselves. In this way the interests of both sides could be accommodated.

The final example of our co-operative attitude is in the area of challenge inspection. My delegation believes strongly that mandatory, short-notice challenge inspection is essential for an effective chemical weapons ban. It is essential because of the difficulty in distinguishing between permitted and illicit production of chemicals and in establishing confidence that all declared stocks and sites are in fact all the stocks and sites there are.

However, as we have made clear on numerous occasions, we are willing to consider any counterproposal that is designed to meet our concerns. We have never insisted on retaining every jot and tittle of our convention: we have sought only to satisfy our security concerns. The collective efforts of this body may develop a better, more effective way of meeting these concerns, and we would welcome such a development. Furthermore, in an effort to meet concerns expressed by the Soviet delegation, let me state again that my delegation is prepared to explore means to ensure that all relevant facilities are subject to challenge inspection, regardless of whether they are privately or State-owned.

I began this statement with a fairly pessimistic assessment of the present state of affairs. I pointed out the increasing risk that the negotiations to ban chemical weapons completely will be overtaken by the spread of chemical weapons capabilities and by the emergence of completely new types of chemical weapons. For my Government these developments are compelling reasons to accelerate the work of the Conference on a complete and verifiable ban on chemical weapons.

How can we accelerate the negotiations? By adopting a problem-solving attitude. The four specific topics I mentioned a moment ago would be good places to start. My delegation is ready to work on them, as well as on all other aspects of the future agreement. Our hope is that all delegations are prepared to join us.