

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The Soviet side stated some time ago that it supported the United Kingdom proposal in document CD/715. We continue to believe that this document could serve as a basis for an integrated solution of the challenge inspection problem. We note the support expressed by a number of delegations for the United Kingdom proposal. Unfortunately, the United States delegation is not among them.

Having considered the existing situation in all its aspects and wishing to facilitate an early agreement, and also proceeding from the need to establish the most stringent verification of the chemical weapons convention, the Soviet Union has decided to go beyond the United Kingdom proposal and adopt the principle of mandatory challenge inspections. As you know, we had earlier agreed that a refusal of challenge inspections would not be permitted in certain instances, e.g. in cases of the suspected use of chemical weapons, as well as in the case of declared locations and facilities. Now we extend this principle of mandatory challenge inspections to all possible cases, making it a universal one.

In our view, the procedure of challenge inspections must reliably ensure that it is impossible for a State to conceal the fact and the consequences of a violation of the convention. We think that no more than 48 hours should elapse between the time of the challenge and the arrival of the inspection group at the inspection site.

The fact that we have adopted the principle of mandatory challenge inspections does not, however, mean that we can disregard the possible disclosure of sensitive data, which can happen during such inspections, especially in cases of abuse. All the misgivings that we previously expressed in this regard obviously remain valid.

Nevertheless, in accepting mandatory challenge inspections we proceed from the understanding that measures should be adopted with a view to minimizing the danger of disclosure of sensitive data, and that all parties must be in an equal position as regards both the right to request a challenge inspection and the obligation to meet such request.

First and foremost we consider that maximum possible use should be made of the central idea of the United Kingdom proposal on challenge inspections -- the possibility for the requested State to suggest alternative measures for conducting inspections in order to demonstrate compliance with its obligations. We suggest that the search be continued for opportunities to elaborate such alternative measures, which may, if necessary and with a view to ensuring that secrets unrelated to chemical weapons remain undisclosed, offer a substitute for complete access to the facilities by the inspectors (for example, visual observation of the facility from the outside, photographing it, analysis of chemical samples, partial access inside the facility, etc.).

It would seem that technical means of international verification using remote control might also serve as a possible alternative measure.

It is our understanding that the possibility of using alternative measures is generally recognized by the participants in the Conference. We