

(Ms. Hernes, Norway)

Non-production is one of the major outstanding issues. The discussions during the meeting of industrial experts in July have, however, clarified certain aspects of this question. Moreover, the Soviet proposal for trial inspections of chemical industry facilities, which is being followed up in the Committee on Chemical Weapons, may facilitate a further convergence of views.

So far, only the United States and the Soviet Union have declared that they possess chemical weapons. The other countries which have stocks of such weapons should follow suit. As the two countries possessing the world's largest stocks of chemical weapons, the United States and the Soviet Union have, however, a special responsibility for implementing a ban on chemical weapons. I am therefore pleased to note that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev reaffirmed at their meeting in Moscow the importance of efforts to address, as a matter of continuing urgency, the unique challenges of a chemical weapons ban and to achieve an effective convention.

The multilateral negotiating process has already been facilitated by the bilateral talks, most recently in the area of destruction of production facilities for chemical weapons. In this context, I also welcome the declaration made by the United States on 28 July concerning the location of its five chemical weapons production facilities.

All participating States in the Conference on Disarmament should make vigorous efforts towards the conclusion of a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable convention. At this stage in the negotiations there is in fact a need for a multilateral exchange of data relevant to the convention.

I can assure you that Norway, which has no chemical weapons, will continue its active role in the work towards a convention banning these insidious weapons. My country strongly condemns any use of chemical weapons in violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Recent reports on the use of chemical weapons underline the necessity of ridding the world of these abhorrent weapons once and for all.

In 1981 Norway initiated a research programme on verification of the chemical weapons convention. The programme, which is being carried out by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, is concerned in particular with verification of the alleged use of chemical weapons. The objective of the Norwegian research programme is twofold. First of all, the task has been to develop concrete, practical procedures for verifying the alleged use of chemical weapons which can be applied on a year-round basis and which will cover all the phases of such an investigation. Secondly, field exercises and analytical work have aimed at providing a sound and realistic data base, which will facilitate implementation of the convention once it is in force.

Whereas our previous research has been concentrated on verification of the alleged use of chemical weapons in winter conditions, the exercises in 1987-1988 were undertaken in summer conditions. The main conclusions from this research are contained in document CD/861, which I take pleasure in introducing at this meeting.