

(Mr. Berg, Norway)

Norway has taken a special interest in the verification issue concerning the comprehensive test ban question, which we consider extremely important. Adequate verification is an essential element in any agreement of this kind. We have participated actively in the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts set up to consider international measures to detect and identify seismic events. This is due to the expertise and instrumentation provided by the Norwegian Seismic Array (NORSAR). Considerable progress has been made in this Group. In fact, the Scientific Group has done some pioneering work. Its proposed system of verification can be a model for verification mechanisms in other areas, in our opinion.

I would like to reconfirm the readiness of my Government to make NORSAR available as a station in a global seismic verification system to monitor compliance with a comprehensive test-ban Treaty.

Another important contribution to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons would be adequate security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States against nuclear attack. Norway accepts the argument of those States that Security Council resolution 255 of 19 June 1968 does not provide sufficient guarantees to non-aligned States. Those States which are not parties to alliance security systems involving nuclear security guarantees and which have been asked to renounce their option to acquire nuclear weapons have a legitimate claim to guarantees against being attacked or threatened by attack with nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States directly involved bear a special responsibility for finding a solution to this problem.

While, admittedly, there is a regrettable lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament, we feel that such lack of progress cannot be accepted as justifying the rejection of non-proliferation measures. It is a matter of great concern to us that several threshold States in regions of tension and conflict have not yet abandoned the option to develop nuclear weapons.

For its part, Norway supports the principle that sensitive nuclear material, equipment and technology should not be transferred or exported unless all nuclear activities of the recipient non-nuclear-weapon States are subject to IAEA safeguards or other similarly binding international commitments not to acquire nuclear explosive devices. Consequently, Norway has decided to restrict its own nuclear exports to countries that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Permit me also very briefly to reiterate our views on chemical weapons. In view of recent reports on the use of chemical weapons, we consider it an urgent need to build obstacles against further developments in this field. We therefore urge intensified efforts to reach agreement on a chemical weapons convention.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons made significant progress last year. Every effort should now be made with a view to arriving at a draft text on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stocks. For this reason, we have noted with satisfaction that the Committee has succeeded in arriving at a consensus decision on a new mandate for the Working Group on Chemical Weapons.