

The recent announcement by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze that the Soviet Union now agrees to a fully mandatory challenge inspection régime is a most important statement, even when read in the light of the five qualifying points made later by Ambassador Nazarkin in his elaboration of USSR views on this issue. Clearly, certain important details remain to be negotiated in this area, as indicated in Ambassador Ekéus' report on his consultations. Inter alia, there needs to be agreement on the precise manner in which challenges would be initiated.

It has long been agreed that allegations of the use of chemical weapons must be dealt with as promptly as possible, and that the only adequate method of determining whether or not chemical weapons have been used is on-site inspection. Canada has considered this problem in much detail and this year, together with the delegation of Norway, we have provided a paper (CD/766) proposing an annex to article IX on this important subject. We hope that it will be possible for the Ad hoc Committee to give full attention to the important question of the verification of CW use as soon as this is practicable.

We have also broken new ground in the CW negotiations this year in developing an understanding of the type of international organization required to oversee the implementation of a CW convention. Much work remains to be done before this organization can become a reality. It is critical that we thoroughly understand what we expect such an organization to do before we can complete our work on article VIII of the draft treaty. The Canadian delegation intends to contribute substantively to this as part of our work. I suggest, however, that the mere fact that we are collectively now addressing such issues is an encouraging sign and a clear mark of progress.

\*\*\*\*\*

Turning now to the nuclear test ban, in the Canadian policy statement mentioned earlier it was emphasized that the pursuit of a comprehensive test ban was a fundamental -- perhaps the fundamental -- nuclear issue before the Committee on Disarmament. The attainment of this objective remains a major priority of the Canadian Government. The step-by-step approach favoured by Canada four years ago, an approach which now has the support of most delegations around this table, remains the most realistic in our view.

There is, of course, another subject on which verification is crucial. As in other arms control and disarmament areas, adequate verification of a comprehensive test ban would be of vital importance. There has, however, been considerable progress in the past four years in the development of a global seismic verification system, and the Group of Scientific Experts is to be congratulated for its constructive work in this area during this period. A Group which may have been considered somewhat controversial four years ago is now universally acknowledged as one of the corner-stones of our Conference on this issue. The large-scale level II data exchange experiment, which could take place as early as next year, will be especially important in demonstrating the feasibility of verification by seismic means. Canada attaches great importance to the effective utilization of wave-form data, including its adequate dissemination to all international data centres within a global system, for this verification purpose. Here too, much has been