

(Mr. Tóth, Hungary)

The Gulf conflict and its aftermath have consequences that go far beyond ongoing multilateral disarmament efforts. The activities carried out and the findings made by the United Nations Special Commission established to implement the relevant paragraphs of Security Council resolution 687 have a clear message to convey to the international community as a whole. Clandestine and overt attempts at proliferation, excessive conventional arms build-up having nothing to do with the needs of legitimate self-defense, have displayed vividly their extremely destabilizing effects for international security. There appear to be discrepancies between the existing, but by no means comprehensive multilateral disarmament machinery, including its legal instruments on the one hand and the revealed facts of reality on the other. Unfortunately, the problems have surfaced in areas where there was an apparent feeling of security. Uncertainties have arisen regarding the effectiveness of multilateral arms control and disarmament regimes established in the field of weapons of mass destruction. This realization might call for reflection on the effectiveness of some of the relevant aspects of existing security and disarmament treaties and other corresponding arrangements.

There is currently an important and welcome political driving force to finalize the convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles. Such an influence is indispensable for the conclusion of any disarmament agreement. However, we must not forget the lessons of the Gulf conflict I have just referred to, namely that some uncertainties have arisen regarding existing multilateral disarmament agreements. It surely cannot be denied that those agreements were concluded on the basis of what could then be politically achieved, yet practice appears to have defied some of the objectives. This, in our view, needs to be taken into account while working on new agreements in order to avoid future "disappointments" in matters related to international security.

Mr. von WAGNER (Germany)

Before introducing the reports on two trial challenge inspections conducted in Germany earlier this year, I would like to start with some observations on this issue in general. In the past our work on the CW convention has been criticized repeatedly from outside the CD, pointing to

(continued)