

(Mr. Batsanov, Russian Federation)

At the same time, guided by our commitment to the cause of eliminating chemical weapons, we took the decision not to block the transmission of the convention to the United Nations General Assembly. Furthermore, we are ready to adopt a flexible approach to the question of the way in which the remaining issues that give us grounds for concern can be resolved before the voting in New York. Contacts which have been established in the last few days, including some at a very high political level, have thrown light on a number of possible measures and approaches which have the potential for a satisfactory solution to our basic concerns. This also inspires us to hope that at the General Assembly Russia will have no problem in supporting the convention, since by then all the issues disturbing us will have been favourably resolved. We count on the other parties concerned to show the necessary constructiveness here. In view of the encouraging new circumstances that have emerged in the last few days, our delegation was prepared to abbreviate somewhat the paragraph in the Ad Hoc Committee's report setting forth the position of the Russian Government on the draft convention. Specifically we would have been ready to take out the first, second and last subparagraphs, leaving, however, the statement of the substance of our concerns about the wording of articles IV and V of the draft convention concerning the procedure for financing verification activity, our position as to how, in our view, such financing should be effected, and the intermediate solution we proposed. This also applies to the question of defining specialized equipment. However, we realized that it was not a good idea at this stage to reopen negotiations on the Ad Hoc Committee's report, and decided to limit ourselves to this statement.

In conclusion I feel it my duty to express our profound gratitude to the secretariat and Mr. Berasategui and Mr. Bensmail for the enormous amount of work that has been done to help us negotiators in performing our complex tasks. I believe that the secretariat has coped with this task brilliantly and I would like to extend my deepest thanks to it once again.

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Mr. RAUTENBACH (South Africa):

... After many years of arduous deliberations, finality has been reached with the conclusion of a convention, realizing the ideal of a complete ban on all chemical weapons and the means to produce them. South Africa welcomes this important milestone in the history of global disarmament. The successful conclusion of the chemical weapons convention is the result of a long and intensive negotiation. South Africa has been involved in this process for only a year, though we acknowledge that the draft text as contained in working paper 400/Rev.2, and now as an appendix to CD/1170, was carefully formulated