

defence agencies having nothing to do with chemical weapons. The adoption of this concept would result in the disclosure of the political, economic, scientific, military, commercial and other secrets of the States parties unrelated to the production, stockpiling and storage of chemical weapons, and the disorganization of various branches of industry.

Secondly, this concept discriminates against parties with State-owned or partly nationalized industry, putting them in an unequal position compared to the States where private enterprise predominates. This has repeatedly been pointed out in the Conference, including at the meeting on 7 August. Such an approach is especially unacceptable given the possibility of the production of binary weapon components by private enterprises.

Thirdly, this concept is, in our opinion, inherently flawed since it proceeds from total distrust between States and is an expression of outright nihilism with regard to international law. The inference present in this concept that any State party may be expected from the outset to violate its international obligations means that any State can be regarded as potentially in violation of international law. The application to the States of a concept contrary to the presumption of innocence would be counter to the principle of the voluntary nature of international obligations. By embracing this approach we would call into question the binding nature of the principle "Pacta sunt servanda" which is one of the foundations of international law, or what is known as "jus cogens", norms that no States can disregard if it is to remain a part of the international community.

And finally, the adoption of this concept can only complicate international relations and even give rise to international friction and conflicts. Hardly anyone fails to perceive that an international inspection conducted under the "open invitation" scheme, for example, at military facilities that have nothing whatever to do with chemical weapons, would provoke countermeasures on the part of the State subjected to such an unwarranted inspection. The consequences of this kind of an "inspection" are difficult to foresee.

The Soviet delegation shares the concern expressed on this subject by Ambassador Dhanapala of Sri Lanka, who said on 7 August: "Verification must be protected against misuse through irresponsible, mischievous and provocative challenges which could lead to counter-challenges and a consequent overburdening of the verification machinery as well as a jeopardizing of the stability of the convention". The "open invitation" concept is an attempt at achieving absolute verification. Here again we support the view expressed by Ambassador Dhanapala, who called such absolute verification a chimera. He suggested that we save our energy by not chasing after it. We call upon everyone to respond positively to this appeal.

For all these reasons the Soviet Union, like many other countries, rejects the "open invitation" concept. It has to be added that this concept is also an expression of the United States demand that other States, and the Soviet Union in the first place, shall open up their entire territories and disclose their military activities. And this is being demanded at the very moment when a frenzied anti-Soviet campaign is under way, when the Soviet Union has been called the "empire of evil" and plans for an all-out or a "limited" nuclear war against it are being discussed. It would be at least naive to expect the Soviet Union to meet such a demand. Indeed, that demand is only advanced in the calculation that it will inevitably be rejected, thus complicating or even disrupting the negotiation of a chemical weapons ban.

The problem of verification must not become an obstacle blocking the way to a chemical weapons convention. As the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, K.U. Chernenko, put it, "when there is a real desire to agree on arms reduction and disarmament