

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 422nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. . . .

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference will continue its consideration of agenda item 4, entitled "Chemical weapons". In accordance with Rule 30 of its Rules of Procedure however, any member wishing to do so may take the floor on any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

CD/PV.422

3

(Mr. Carlos Miranda y Elio, Spain)

. . . . Now then, on the path leading towards that goal it is necessary to bear in mind the essential considerations of balance and security. This can only be achieved in a gradual process that takes account not only of nuclear weapons, but also of all other weapons, including chemical weapons, and conventional weapons, within the context of global consideration of that balance and, obviously, bearing in mind the fact that the equalizing factor should in principle not be an increase in the strength of the party that is at a disadvantage at a given time or in a given category of weapons, but rather a reduction in principle of the forces of the party that is in the situation of superiority.

CD/PV.422

6

(Mr. Carlos Miranda y Elio, Spain)

. . . . I am pleased to express our satisfaction at the progress now being achieved in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. It is well known that Spain does not possess such weapons today and does not wish to possess them and that it is in favour of the completion as soon as possible of a treaty prohibiting not only the use but also the development, production and stockpiling of these weapons and imposing the destruction of those that already exist.

The 1925 Protocol, to which Spain is a contracting party and which meant a large step in the right direction, none the less reserves the possibility of possessing chemical weapons and the legitimacy of their use as a reprisal. And, although these arms were not used in the Second World War, we have seen with indignation that they have been used in other conflicts, and especially in the conflict raging today between Iraq and Iran. Consequently, only the radical prohibition of the manufacture and possession of these weapons will be an absolute guarantee of the impossibility of their use. Of course, a treaty of this kind requires in its turn rigorous procedures for verifying that its terms are being respected by all its parties and also requires universal participation and, first and foremost, the participation of the great military Powers.