

(Ms. Sinegiorgis, Ethiopia)

Regarding the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, we welcome the important progress made during the previous year under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, whose dynamic and effective guidance has contributed substantially in laying a firm foundation for the convention. We are also confident that the Ad hoc Committee will achieve yet further results this year under the competent and energetic chairmanship of Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden.

The delegation of Ethiopia is satisfied that the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has been considerably improved this year by the agreement reached to include final drafting of the convention. This is a clear reflection of the fact that we have actually reached the stage where we are in a position to come up with one effective, global and verifiable CW convention. No doubt there are still some outstanding problems to be dealt with. But seen against the backdrop of the work done so far, we are of the view that by setting a time frame, we can face the challenge of resolving the remaining issues and conclude the convention at an early date. We also share the prevailing general optimism that a convention on chemical weapons is now within sight.

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As His Excellency Ambassador Stülpnagel said in his statement to the CD on 8 March 1990, "there is no reason why we should not set ourselves equally ambitious goals for the conclusion of the chemical weapons convention. Otherwise we risk being the last to change in a world of change, or those who did not change in time". We concur with this assertion; and in our view, at present the remaining issues are more of a political than a technical nature and as such, in order to conclude the convention what is most required is a firm political will, which we hope will be adequately manifested.

... I need not remind this negotiating body that a lot is expected from us by the international community. Our achievements are bound to be measured against those lofty expectations. No doubt, a simple stock-taking of our work would clearly reveal that we have no reason to be proud except for the chemical weapons negotiations which are nearing their final stage. Unfortunately, however, even the progress we are witnessing in the chemical weapons negotiations still falls far short of our expectations due to lack of sufficient political will. In the light of the present conducive international atmosphere, which in the view of the Ethiopian delegation is indeed a unique period in contemporary history, we would be judged severely if this opportune moment were to slip by without meeting the challenges posed by mankind's quest to free the world from the threat of all weapons of mass destruction, and in particular the threat of a nuclear holocaust.