view of the concerns expressed by the Soviet Union and others about international on-site verification, the United States chose the approach which would minimize the need for such inspection, that is, to require that all chemical weapons be destroyed. However, the United States delegation is willing to consider any proposals for diversion, as long as these proposals specify in detail what could be diverted and the verification measures that would apply to such diversion. This would enable members of the Conference on Disarmament to determine whether the requirement for effective verification will be satisfied by those proposals.

Article VI of the draft convention requires a party to cease production of chemical weapons immediately and then to destroy its chemical weapons production facilities within 10 years. A party must submit a plan for the destruction of these production facilities that explains the method that will be used to close and destroy the equipment and structures comprising the facility, and that specifies the time periods when each specific production facility will be destroyed. As with chemical weapons, production facilities must be destroyed in accordance with an agreed time-table that ensures that no State will gain a military advantage during the destruction process. This time-table will also have to be negotiated before the convention is opened for signature. The destruction of these facilities would be subject to systematic international on-site verification, and annual reports on the destruction process would be also required.

Pursuant to the definition of chemical weapons production facility in the draft convention, parties would not only be required to destroy facilities that actually produce chemical munitions. Parties would also be required, with one exception, to destroy any facility that was designed, constructed, or used since 1 January 1946 to produce for use in chemical weapons any toxic chemicals or key precursors. The only exception to this broad requirement would be for facilities that in the past produced a toxic chemical listed in schedule B of annex III that was used for chemical weapons purposes.

CD/PV.270 pp.24-25 Argentina/Carasales 5.7.84 VER

We must bear in mind that time is not on our side. It may be worth mentioning a case connected with verification. It is by no means my intention to discuss the need for a satisfactory verification system in any disarmament agreement, even if there are examples where there is no such element. On the contrary, the trust which agreements should generate in this delicate and complex field stems inevitably from the security that they are fully complied with and respected, for which purpose suitable verification is an inescapable requirement.

However, it is frequently asserted that this or that prohibition is currently unverifiable and therefore efforts should not be made in that field. The logical corollary is that we should wait until such verification, which might be termed perfect, is considerable possible. However, who can assure us that over time verification will become easier and not on the contrary more difficult, if not impossible? We are living in a period of dizzying technological progress which can be applied both to the development of new types of weapons and to better methods of detection. It may easily be supposed that the resources available will be greater in the first case than in the second. Will not the day come when the sophistication and miniaturization of destructive devices will make verification an impossible task? Can we remain inactive when our goal is growing more and more remote? Is it not preferable at once to undertake the negotiation of international disarmament instruments, in whose context the search for satisfactory verification systems is possible as well as essential, without indefinite and unproductive delays while awaiting a future, which, it must be foreseen, will never be better and probably will be