

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

At the end of his statement, the representative of the United States, referring to the need to ban poisonous substances, could not resist the temptation to employ a peculiar type of poisonous substance -- falsehood and calumny -- right in the middle of our meeting; even the reference to the President does not in any way alter the fact that a poisonous cloud was released in this room. We regret this, as once again the assertions by the United States of its attachment to chemical disarmament were placed in doubt by the United States delegation itself. The reasons for this importunate repetition of lies are well known. One of them -- and probably the main one -- is to justify the United States' policy of chemical rearmament. It is enough to mention a single fact: the United States document (CD/264) speaks openly of the advantages of binary weapons, which the United States is today proceeding to produce on a large scale.

I should like to say, finally, that the preparation of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons is an urgent and priority task. All delegations have tirelessly repeated this. We want to go further, and to propose concrete steps towards the fulfilment of this priority task.

In the first place, we consider it essential that the activity of the Working Group, under the able guidance of our friend, Ambassador Comrade Sujka, should not be suspended for almost six months (i.e. from practically the beginning of September, when the Committee's session is to end, until the end of February, when the Group will in effect be able to resume its work. We are opposed to this long interval. We are ready to agree to any generally acceptable arrangement. The Working Group on the prohibition of chemical weapons could continue its work now; it could resume work after a short interruption, or, lastly, it could resume its work at the beginning of next year, as happened this year in the case of the Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament.

In the second place, we consider that it would be useful to establish a date, even if only an approximate one, for the completion of work on the convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons. In this connection it should be borne in mind, inter alia, that the chemicals industry is developing today not daily but literally hourly. A few years ago, the problem of the prohibition of binary chemical weapons did not exist; no one was talking about it. It has now arisen in connection with the well-known decision of the United States Government, and this has greatly complicated the negotiations. This, too, has been mentioned today by all speakers with the sole exception, I believe, of the first speaker. Who, I ask, can guarantee that while we are squandering precious time, and discussing sometimes doubtful problems, new and still more dangerous types of chemical weapons will not appear, and all the work we have done so far will have been in vain, will come to naught.

We are pressed for time, gentlemen, on the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons.