

(Mr. Valentino, Malta)

interest of international worldwide security. In this respect, the results achieved concerning the conclusion of the chemical weapons convention should be brought to the attention of all States Members of the United Nations together with the invitation for them to sign the convention as soon as it is opened for signature. Active efforts should continue to ensure that the treaty enters into force at the earliest possible date.

This year was a successful year for the Conference on Disarmament and we hope that other sessions of the Conference on Disarmament will be characterized by such successful events as the one on a multilateral chemical weapons convention which we have managed to complete after long and difficult negotiations.

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Mr. MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (translated from Arabic): Our delegation would like to express its deep appreciation for the opportunity given us to make a brief statement at this important Conference, before the conclusion of its work, concerning the comments and reservations of the Syrian Arab Republic on the draft convention prohibiting chemical weapons, which the Conference will transmit to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forthcoming forty-seventh session. Without going into the details of the draft convention, some parts of which we feel require further consideration, we should like to express our full support for the proposals and comments made by the developing countries which are members of the Conference. We would have liked to see those proposals and remarks taken into account in the preparation of the final text of the draft convention, since they express the concerns of those countries and their desire to avoid inappropriate and unbalanced conclusions, double standards of implementation, and in particular potential adverse consequences for the development process in the developing countries or for their national security or sovereignty. While acknowledging the importance of this convention and its sound aim of protecting mankind from the horrors of chemical weapons, we none the less feel that it cannot achieve that aim without a similar prohibition on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In the Middle East, we are facing the dangers of these weapons as a result of Israeli nuclear armament which is jeopardizing peace and security and endangering human life as well as the environment and the future of this sensitive region of the world, not to mention the enormous perils arising from Israel's possession of advanced technology for the development and production of chemical weapons.

The Syrian Arab Republic has called for the Middle East to be turned into a region free from chemical weapons, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It has also called for an interlinkage between these weapons, without which the convention banning chemical weapons will be inadequate to achieve the desired purpose. We feel that a debate on the draft convention in the General Assembly at its forthcoming forty-seventh session offers an appropriate opportunity to improve the content of the draft convention and