

(Mr. Fischer, German Democratic Republic)

The verification procedure to be provided for by the convention will reach deeply into civilian chemical industries. While the legitimate interests of those industries must be protected, they must not serve as a pretext for undercutting the verification measures needed to make the convention work. The chemical industry of the German Democratic Republic already supports the cause of the convention in many ways. My country is prepared to accept any form of verification required under such an instrument. The German Democratic Republic has already submitted data on its chemical production relevant to the convention, and has carried out a national trial inspection. A facility of the pharmaceutical plant "VEB Arzneimittelwerk Dresden" will be available from the month of May for an international trial inspection.

We agree with all those who consider the elaboration of modalities and procedures for challenge inspections to be a high political priority. In this regard, trial inspections in the military field would also be advisable. Ideas on what procedure should be followed in future inspections could be tested and fleshed out.

We consider that trial inspections "on challenge" might be undertaken in a bilateral as well as a multilateral framework. For example, the German Democratic Republic would be ready to prepare such an inspection together with the Federal Republic of Germany and carry it out on the basis of reciprocity.

Transparency and openness create favourable conditions for the completion of the convention and for its observance. The German Democratic Republic is in favour of making full use of every chance that brings us closer to a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons. A zone free of chemical weapons in Central Europe, for instance, could be established relatively fast. We have taken note with interest of the announcement made by the United States that it will examine ways of speeding up the withdrawal of its chemical weapons from the Federal Republic of Germany. Would it not be logical, in these circumstances, to ensure Central Europe's freedom from chemical weapons by an international instrument, thus giving a powerful boost to the elimination of these weapons on a global scale?

At this point, I wish to repeat and reaffirm what I said both before the United Nations General Assembly and at the Paris Conference in January: the German Democratic Republic has no chemical weapons, nor has it such weapons of other States stationed on its territory. It is neither engaged in the development of chemical weapons nor does it have the equipment for their production. The German Democratic Republic is ready to join a chemical weapons convention immediately after its conclusion. Let us make 1989 the decisive year in the drive for a ban on chemical weapons. Chemistry in the service of life and not of death should be everyone's watchword.

There is no doubt that a convention banning chemical weapons would also stimulate further global disarmament measures. This applies in particular to the nuclear field. Indisputably, Soviet-American negotiations play an outstanding role in that area. We advocate the early conclusion of a treaty