

(Mr. Mellor, United Kingdom)

régime for civil chemical production. The momentum that developed last year under Dr. Cromartie has been maintained under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus and I was pleased to have the opportunity of an informal talk with him yesterday. I am heartened by the warm reception for the British paper on challenge inspection that we tabled last year and many problems of principle seem set for resolution. Nevertheless, as the solutions to some of our differences of principle become clearer, so it becomes more important to think through all the practical implications. Permit me to mention two areas in particular.

In the first place, we all accept the need to verify that chemical weapons are not secretly produced and that precursors made in the civil industry are not diverted or abused. But, at the same time, we recognize the need to reconcile the objectives of the convention with the legitimate concerns of civil industry if the convention is to be acceptable to all. This inevitably means looking at very detailed issues. The seminar held here in Geneva last week for representatives from many national chemical industries gave an opportunity for detailed and practical discussions of this crucial area. We must now build on this experience. We must agree among ourselves such crucial questions as those chemicals we wish to see subject to verifications; those levels of production which should concern the convention; and how to update the overall régime to take account of advances in science.

My second example has perhaps received less attention in the past. Once all the negotiating problems have been resolved, we have to move quickly and effectively from an agreed convention to implementing an actual global ban, which actually works in the way the negotiators intend. We in the United Kingdom have in the past stressed the case for having an international organization able to carry out this all-important task of overseeing implementation. Progress has been made. But we now need to give further thought to how the organization can be set up, so that everything necessary is done in good time.

That is why I am tabling today a new United Kingdom paper, which I think has been distributed, entitled "Making the chemical weapons ban effective". It contains our detailed ideas on what is needed. The paper suggests that some aspects can be left in the hands of a Preparatory Commission. However, the paper also notes that further work is needed here, in the Ad hoc Committee. We must ensure that adequate verification technology is available. And we have to obtain a clearer idea of the likely size and cost of the permanent staff of the organization.

Once more, openness should not mean more rhetoric but more disclosure. What we need is not more speeches, but more facts and figures. We need to know what other Governments have, where they have it and what they do with it. Now is the time, I believe, for all delegations, including those which have declined in the past, to indicate their likely future declarations. Only in this way can realistic estimates be prepared. And only in this way can the crucial confidence in this mutual endeavour be established. The new United Kingdom paper provides the framework within which, we hope, good intentions can be translated into effective action.