

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

On the issue of incorporating into the mandate the word "use", let me say the following. As we all know, the 1925 Geneva Protocol bans the use of chemical weapons, but many States, including many here around this table, entered into a reservation giving the reserving State the right to use chemical weapons in response to a chemical weapons attack against the reserving State or its allies. It is essential that the United States retain the right to retaliate in kind to chemical weapon attack on the United States or its forces as long as we possess chemical weapons. We thus need to preserve this security option during the transition to a régime banning all chemical weapons. Furthermore, it is the view of the United States that it is inappropriate to single out or emphasize only certain areas in the chemical weapons mandate. In our draft text the parties would also undertake not to acquire chemical weapons, not to retain chemical weapons, not to transfer them, not to assist, encourage or induce anyone else to engage in any of the prohibited activities, and we are not adding all of those other prohibitions to the mandate.

I have been asked why it is that two days ago I circulated here in this body the text of a communiqué entered into by the United States and the USSR, where the word "use" was specified. I think the lesson there is very clear. When we are talking about use as an objective of the convention, we certainly stand by the words that are in our own text and the modifications to it that have come forward, but when the word "use" is a stalking-horse for some other purpose, we will continue to resist its being singled out for special attention in that regard.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, today we are very happy to see that under your able guidance and through serious and constructive consultations we have ironed out some of the differences on the issue of the mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, so that the Ad hoc Committee can be re-established and start its work as soon as possible. This is the hope that our delegation has always held. For this I would like to congratulate you and the plenary. Within this short period of 10 days our Conference on Disarmament has achieved one success after another and created excellent conditions for smooth running of the future substantive negotiations. We would like to thank you for your fruitful leadership. At the same time we would like to thank the Group of 21 as well as all the other groups for their co-operative spirit and the active contributions they have made.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished Ambassador of France, Mr. Morel, once again for his contribution during the 1989 session. I would like to express our appreciation for the excellent work accomplished by him and the chairmen of the five working groups. I warmly congratulate the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. Hyltenius, who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. We believe that with his rich experience and diplomatic skill he will help the Ad hoc Committee to achieve new results. Our delegation will co-operate with you fully, Sir, as well as with the Ad hoc Committee.