

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

from the Soviet-American agreements reached after laborious negotiations over many years between the USSR and the United States.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly emphasized the tremendous significance of an agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Pointing out that the problem of the speediest possible prohibition of these weapons, which are one of the most barbaric means of annihilating people, is squarely before us, Mr. Andrei Gromyko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, called on our partners at the negotiations to start the elaboration of an international convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. The same view is held by all the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. In the Political Declaration adopted at Prague they stated that they deem it necessary to speed up the elaboration of an international convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons.

With this noble goal in mind, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries bend their efforts to finding mutually acceptable solutions. They have always consistently pursued this policy in the Committee on Disarmament and they continue to do so now.

In our view, at this stage of the talks it is of key importance to achieve an agreement on the entire range of questions connected with the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, in other words, the questions entrusted to contact group A, headed by the representative of the Polish People's Republic, Colonel J. Cialowicz. It has in fact already managed to achieve something. But we believe that there have been and that there still are the preconditions for achieving considerably more, in fact for considering the problem of the destruction of stocks to have been solved in a preliminary manner.

It appears that one of the serious disagreements concerns the question of the specific content of the initial declarations by the States parties to the future convention of their stocks of chemical weapons. The Soviet delegation is convinced that at such an early stage of the implementation of the convention i.e. 30 days after it has entered into force, from all points of view the declaration of stocks according to the categories of chemicals would be more than sufficient. That would give a general picture of the state of affairs as regards stocks and provide the necessary level of confidence. It is only natural that during the subsequent stages more detailed data would be submitted for the purposes of verification of the destruction process. However, some delegations, including those of non-aligned countries, have advocated that the States parties to the convention should submit more detailed data from the very start of its implementation.

With a view to resolving this problem, which has been deliberately complicated in many ways, the Soviet Union today proposes that the States parties to the future convention which possess chemical weapons should undertake to declare, not later than 30 days after the convention enters into force, their stocks of chemical weapons, both filled and unfilled, their precursors and the components of binary