

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The convention should indeed be universal. Though the notions of non-proliferation are gradually fading, they are not yet fully disposed of. On the other hand, it should be stressed that the availability of chemical technology for civil use must not be compromised by the convention. Technological assistance for developing countries is thus underlined.

As far as the Organization is concerned, we believe that the countries most affected need to have a better chance for representation.

I should add that, as regards our region, it is imperative that the countries concerned should join the convention simultaneously. Moreover, while we share the concerns about proliferation of nuclear arms in our region and its parallels with chemical weapons, we do not feel that there has to be a direct link if this would compromise the fate of the CW convention. In fact, we should strongly pursue the issue of nuclear proliferation in our region during the fourth NPT review conference.

(Mr. Arteaga, Venezuela)

... We attach major importance to all actions designed to lead to the completion of the convention banning chemical weapons. We agree with others that the Paris and Canberra conferences helped to bring about awareness in public opinion and motivate the sectors most directly concerned in the application of the future convention. All this, taken together with the results of the meeting between Secretary of State Baker and Minister for Foreign Affairs Shevardnadze in September 1989 and last month, give grounds for a degree of optimism about the future evolution of the negotiations. We take note of the recent joint statement describing the outcome of the last meeting, which indicates the intention of the two Governments to reach a bilateral agreement on the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles. It is to be hoped that this proposal will lead to tangible results in the negotiations taking place here, and that the total destruction of all chemical weapons will be carried out without further delay.

As we announced at the last United Nations General Assembly, Venezuela, desirous of making a contribution to international efforts to prepare the necessary conditions for the rapid implementation of the future convention, has taken the initiative of organizing in Caracas, in the middle of this year, a regional seminar for participants from Latin American and Caribbean countries. The purpose is to familiarize the States that are not members of the Conference on Disarmament with the scope, purposes and objectives of the convention, as well as the verification machinery that is to be established. In due course we will provide further information about this event.