

(Mr. Hu, China)

others. The new "rolling text" itself indicates the enormity of the work. However, if we are to achieve the goal of concluding the convention within this year, much difficult work remains to be done and a number of major issues have yet to be resolved - for instance, challenge inspection, verification of the civilian chemical industry, the executive council, abandoned chemical weapons, article XI of the convention, and so on. China has always maintained a positive position towards the chemical weapons convention and its negotiation, and the Chinese delegation hopes that fair and reasonable solutions can be found to all these issues so as to successfully realize the goal of completing the chemical weapons convention before the end of the year.

The fundamental purpose and objective of the future chemical weapons convention lie in the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all chemical weapons. To this end all States should undertake corresponding commitments, including the obligation to destroy the chemical weapons each has abandoned on the territory of another State. A just and thorough solution of the issue of chemical weapons abandoned by a foreign State is one of the most urgent tasks in the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. And the purpose of my statement today is to introduce documents CD/1127 and CD/1130 tabled by the Chinese delegation upon instructions on the issue of abandoned chemical weapons. These two documents also bear the symbols CD/CW/WP.384 and CD/CW/WP.387.

First of all, in response to requests and proposals made by some delegations, the Chinese delegation is now providing, in the form of a CD document as well as a working paper of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, information on chemical weapons abandoned in China by a foreign State, with a view to promoting understanding and facilitating the work of the Conference and its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

As is known to all, the Chinese people have in the past been victims of the use of chemical weapons by a foreign State, and even to this date such weapons are still causing tremendous losses and constitute a grave threat. After nearly half a century, such weapons continue to be discovered in China. They have done great harm to the safety of the Chinese people and their property and ecology. As the foreign State concerned has provided no information on the chemical weapons it abandoned in China, it is impossible to take the necessary precautionary measures when such weapons are discovered, and many injuries have occurred as a result. Preliminary statistics reveal that direct victims alone have numbered more than 2,000. Furthermore, the danger posed by such abandoned chemical weapons to the natural environment and to the safety of human beings is increasing. About 2.3 million pieces of chemical munitions abandoned in China by the foreign State have been found so far. Among them roughly 300,000 pieces have been destroyed or given preliminary treatment by China, with approximately 2 million pieces yet to be destroyed. Since most of these chemical munitions are still buried, the exact figure has yet to be verified after excavation. In addition, about 120 tons of toxic chemical agents abandoned by the foreign State in China have been discovered, among which more than 20 tons have been destroyed by China. The present state of affairs in this regard has been a source of bitter grievance and serious concern for the Chinese people.