

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian):

••• The new Soviet initiatives aimed at accelerating the negotiations on banning chemical weapons, which were put forward by the member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, E.A. Shevardnadze at the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on 6 August 1987, are receiving, it seems, very broad support. I would like to express gratitude to those delegations which stated their positive attitude to those initiatives at the 6 August meeting.

In his statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR said that "the Soviet delegation at the negotiations on this question will proceed from the need to make legally binding the principle of mandatory challenge inspections without the right of refusal".

It would not be an overstatement to say that this is now the key problem in the negotiations. Progress on a number of other issues also depends on the speedy solution of this problem. We support the efforts being made to solve the problem of challenge inspections by the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, R. Ekéus, and several other representatives. Our new initiatives are designed to make a tangible contribution to the early resolution of this issue.

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