

(Mr. Park. Republic of Korea)

... The draft convention on the chemical weapons ban is one of the most crucial and promising items on the Conference's agenda and has raised hopes and expectations for the early conclusion of the convention. In our view, the key to the success of the convention on chemical weapons lies in assuring universal adherence to the convention. We share the view of other delegations that universal adherence could best be ensured by making the convention effective, non-discriminatory and verifiable. To this end, we wish to underline the importance of ironing out the remaining differences for the establishment of an effective verification regime. Such a regime would enhance confidence in the convention by assuring each State party that other States parties remain in full compliance.

President Bush of the United States made an announcement on 13 May on the United States unconditional commitment to the destruction of all of its stocks of chemical weapons within 10 years of the convention coming into force. President Bush's new arms control initiative is most welcome and represents a positive and far-sighted step toward achieving universal adherence to the chemical weapons convention.

The outbreak of chemical warfare was an ominous possibility during the Gulf war, and the world was alerted to its potentially catastrophic consequences. Despite progress made in disarmament negotiations between the two super Powers and in Europe, and the recent conclusion of the Gulf war, the danger of chemical weapons use has not completely disappeared. The time is

(Mr. Park. Republic of Korea)

ripe to take advantage of every possible opportunity to broaden support for the early and successful conclusion of the convention, in the same way that momentum was created by the Paris Ministerial Conference and the Canberra Government-Industry Conference in 1989.

The convention on banning chemical weapons and the Convention prohibiting biological weapons are twin branches of the same tree. The third review conference of the biological weapons Convention will be held in September in Geneva. The Republic of Korea has always supported international efforts to eradicate weapons of mass destruction. My country, as a party to the Convention since 1987, will be represented at the review conference and will make an active contribution to making the Convention effective and lasting.