

(Mr. Kostarczyk, Poland)

The Conference cannot delay its decision on the composition of the executive council. Positions of States in this regard as well as on criteria to be applied are already well identified. Early agreement on the composition of the executive council and related matters will greatly facilitate the work of the Conference on other, more substantive issues.

I should also like to mention one additional issue to which my Government attaches particular importance, namely, the question of old or abandoned chemical weapons. Our position in this regard is clear - responsibility for the destruction of such weapons lies with the abandoning State.

As is well known, Poland - like many other members of the Conference on Disarmament - has already put on record its willingness to become an original signatory of the convention. We trust that in the interest of the effectiveness and universality of the future convention, all members of the Conference will be in this group.

We also believe that the Conference on Disarmament will submit to the forthcoming forty-seventh session of the General Assembly an agreed final draft of a convention on chemical weapons for its endorsement and subsequent signature. In this connection, I wish to express to the delegation of France our appreciation for the offer, made by President François Mitterrand at the recent Security Council "summit meeting" in New York, to hold in Paris, before the year's end, a special conference to sign the convention.