

(Mr. Busby, United States)

Let me now say a few words regarding the assertion of the Soviet delegation on 18 August that somehow my own delegation has been holding up progress.

Contrary to the assertions of the Soviet delegation, the lack of progress is not due to United States plans to produce binary chemical weapons. My delegation has fully explained the reasons for this interim measure to protect its national security in the absence of an effective agreement. We have welcomed discussions on our modernization programme and have gone to great lengths to ensure that our own proposals include provisions to ensure that binary weapons are completely covered by the ban, including the verification aspects. The United States has observed a moratorium on chemical weapons production for 14 years. Can the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union say the same for his country? We have made it quite plain that, rather than producing chemical weapons, we would prefer a sound agreement and we are willing to work hard to achieve it. It may be, as the Soviet representative said on 18 August, that the Chemical Weapons negotiations will be killed. But I can assure you it will not be the United States delegation that kills them.

In this connection my delegation deplores the unseemly ad hominem attack on the Vice-President of the United States made in the recent Soviet plenary statement. Such remarks do not belong in the Committee. I hope they will not be repeated.

Furthermore, the problem is not a lack of willingness on the part of the United States delegation to meet Soviet concerns about the intrusiveness of on-site inspection of stockpile destruction. The United States Working Paper of 5 July (CD/387) includes several important new elements for just this purpose. We now recognize the importance of co-operation between national and international personnel. We are now prepared to use data generated during routine facility operations for verification purposes. We have agreed that efforts must be made to minimize interference with the operation of a destruction facility. And, we are now prepared to restrict verification to the actual destruction step. In our view, these important steps to satisfy Soviet concerns seem to have been ignored by that delegation.

Nor is the lack of progress due to United States reluctance to draft treaty texts. Drafting of treaty texts cannot proceed any faster than resolution of key issues. While drafting can sometimes help clarify issues, in this case the issues have been clear for several years. My delegation's concerns about beginning to draft treaty texts at this stage have been explained previously, and I need not repeat them today. I would only say that these concerns have been heightened by developments in Contact Group A, which dealt with stockpile-related issues. In that group drafting of treaty texts on minor questions was substituted for efforts to resolve key questions.

I now want to respond to a number of the substantive suggestions made in the Soviet plenary statement on 18 August.

My delegation recognizes the generally constructive nature of the Soviet remarks on various substantive issues related to chemical weapons stockpiles.