

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

... Undoubtedly, the Conference has invested its energies in efforts to work out a convention banning chemical weapons with some tangible results. In the past year the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Pierre Morel of France was able to make progress on a number of outstanding issues relating to inspection guidelines, legal and technical issues and the other organs to be associated with the convention, as well as some highly political issues like challenge inspection.

The proposed convention is clearly taking shape, and it cannot be denied that the Paris international conference prohibiting chemical weapons and the Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons have had a positive impact on the deliberations of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. My delegation would like to join those delegations that have already thanked Ambassador Morel and those who worked closely with him for their indefatigable efforts in advancing the work of the Ad hoc Committee. The quality of the present draft text of the convention banning chemical weapons indicates that the day is not far off when the convention will be ready for conclusion.

Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden has taken up the chairmanship of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We are convinced that he will be able to conduct the work of this subsidiary body to the satisfaction of all delegations, and that this may be the year the Ad hoc Committee reaches the finishing-line in its work to conclude the long-awaited convention prohibiting chemical weapons. Of course, this would require the extensive consideration of all outstanding issues, including those pointed out in the statement of the Group of 21 that was made in the plenary of this Conference on 6 February this year. We would like to wish Ambassador Hyltenius success in the tasks lying ahead of him.

It is understandable that the Conference on Disarmament has devoted so much of its time to the activities of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The promise of a convention banning these hideous weapons spurs the Conference to focus its attention almost exclusively on this issue. It is to be hoped that this promise will hold to avoid disappointment and frustration within the Conference.

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