

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

K.U. Chernenko, put it, "when there is a real desire to agree on arms reduction and disarmament measures, verification has never been and cannot be an obstacle".

The Soviet delegation suggests that the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons should concentrate first of all on working out measures and forms of verification that would be both effective and practically feasible, rather than indulge in discussions around extravagant and deliberately unrealistic and irrational proposals. There is still plenty of serious and vitally important work to be done, including even in such apparently "advanced" areas as the destruction of stockpiles or permitted production at a specialized facility. We are convinced that a considerable potential for progress exists also with regard to the procedures for taking decisions on verification in the Consultative Committee and its organs, the procedures for conducting the actual inspections, etc.

I shall now deal with another fundamental problem related to the future chemical weapons convention. The Soviet delegation, like many others, is firmly convinced that the question of banning binary chemical weapons as a qualitatively new, and most dangerous, type of such weapons, described by its creators as the weapon of the future, should be among the central issues of the future convention.

However, a look at the United States draft reveals that the question of banning binary weapons is obviously being downplayed. The United States representative, Ambassador Fields, said in one of his statements at the Conference that the convention should ban "any type of munitions or devices used to release the chemicals on the battlefield". One possible understanding of this formula is that it covers the binary chemical weapons as well. But if so, why is this most advanced type of chemical weapons not referred to by its proper name, while it is included in the United States chemical rearmament programmes quite independently and is regarded as most promising?

One cannot avoid the conclusion that all this vagueness and lack of definition serves to conceal the intention to leave open a possibility of mounting the mass production of this latest generation of chemical weapons in the United States. The repeated statements by the NATO armed forces commander, General Rogers, regarding the importance of binary chemical weapons being deployed in Europe only confirm this understanding of ours.

The time has come when the question of banning binary weapons must be clarified once and for all if we are to move forward in our negotiations. We consider it necessary, in particular, to work out, for the purposes of the convention a definition of a "key component of a binary chemical system" so that it could not in some way or another entirely vanish from the scope of the convention, and then to compile, on the basis of this definition, a list of such components which should be kept in mind when formulating the relevant provisions of the convention.

There is another issue in the negotiations on banning chemical weapons that must be completely clarified. It is the question of prohibiting the use of herbicides in military operations, as well as the use of irritants in military and other conflicts. Their exemption from the ban is counter to the Geneva