

Mr. CESKA (Austria):

... The need to achieve results through the negotiations which take place within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament proves to be ever more pressing as time goes by. The long-expected breakthrough towards a global convention on a chemical weapons ban still seems beyond reach. We therefore share some of the feelings of disappointment emphasized by those who have rather soberly analysed this year's spring session of the Conference. After all, 17 years have elapsed since the last multilateral convention in the field of arms control and disarmament, namely, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, was adopted in this forum.

And yet, had I made this statement two months earlier, I would have been even more pessimistic about the prospects of significant progress in the field of chemical weapons. Today as we approach the end of this year's summer session, some modest hopes seem justified in this respect. Positive developments, among them progress in bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR on the technicalities of verification, are to be noted. It is at present not easy to assess the importance of these bilateral understandings for a future multilateral convention. But though immobility appeared, as so often before, to be this Conference's fate, some movement towards concrete results can now be discerned.

Many unresolved questions, both of a technical as well as a political nature, will require renewed efforts and strong determination, particularly on the part of the main actors in the field of chemical weapons, in order to finally achieve a meaningful global convention. But, with all necessary

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