

(Mr. Waldegrave, United Kingdom)

On the practical level, we have recently presented ideas for ad hoc inspections to strengthen the verification framework. Our aim was to carry forward the debate originating with the proposals of Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany in this area. More work is needed in this key area in order to establish a convincing structure for the verification régime. We have also recently presented a working paper on novel agents which aims to point up issues which have to be addressed in the negotiations. It is essential that the convention should be able to deal effectively with developments in chemical and biochemical technology.

On challenge inspection, we have been concentrating on a comprehensive programme of national trial inspections at a wide range of military facilities. Challenge inspection will of course be crucial to the verification of a convention. Yet there is still uncertainty about how to reconcile the rigour necessary for effective verification with the protection of legitimate national or commercial secrets. Our national trial inspections are starting to produce some answers. The paper, CD/921, which I have the honour to present today offers some interim observations in the light of our experience to date in trials at ammunition storage facilities. We will be giving a presentation on this subject with supporting video material during this session. And we hope to offer more considered conclusions after further practice inspections at more sensitive facilities.

We hope the United Kingdom's experience will be useful to others. For our part, we have found these trials invaluable. We strongly encourage others to carry out similar trials, if they have not already done so. The benefits of practical experimentation have also come out clearly in the considerable number of routine civil trial inspections held by various nations. Two points have emerged particularly strongly - concerns over commercial secrecy, and the need for work on verification technology. It is right that you should be looking closely at these issues. The time is now ripe to assess the lessons learnt from the trials for the "rolling text".

I return here to the second of the themes I introduced earlier. Underlying all this work is the basic question of confidence. Confidence between East and West is growing in many areas. Chemical weapons must not be exempt. This is why the lack of Soviet openness about their stockpile matters. It damages that indivisible quality of trust. We hope that the general improvement in the Soviet attitude to publishing data will soon extend to the area of chemical weapons, where evasion and distrust are currently a major obstacle to progress. NATO and the Warsaw Pact are well placed to offer a lead.

But all countries - not just NATO and the Warsaw Pact - have a collective responsibility to demonstrate in practical ways their commitment to the control of chemical weapons. We must all take practical steps to control the proliferation of chemical weapons and join international efforts to apply pressure to countries seeking to conceal their production or use. We must all give data on our national chemical weapons capability where this exists. We must all honour existing international obligations against the use of chemical weapons. Above all, we must recognize that the leap-frogging acquisition of chemical weapons undermines rather than enhances security, and we must work