

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

facilitate responses by the Soviet delegation, we joined forces a few days later with the Dutch delegation to reformulate our small questionnaire and to structure it more logically. I am grateful to Ambassador Issraelyan for having supplied some initial answers to our first series of questions in his statement on 12 August. At that juncture it was quite obviously impossible to have replies ready on all our questions. We all recognize how complex this subject matter is. Yet, reiterating the high interest of my delegation in the Soviet Union's views, I would like to state that my delegation continues to hope for a full formal response to our queries at the appropriate time. The Soviet Union has been particularly articulate in stressing the urgency of an early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. Since it appears that the clarifications in the international verification realm which my delegation seeks would be important for rapid progress in our negotiation, we can confidently assume that early replies to our questionnaire would help to advance the course of our negotiations. I would also like to remind the distinguished Soviet delegate that my delegation was immediately ready to supply answers to similar questions in the verification field which were directed to us after the circulation of our working paper CD/265. I myself addressed these questions in a detailed statement in plenary on 15 April, and my delegation took an opportunity to elaborate our replies and elucidate additional aspects in direct contact with our Soviet colleagues. Some degree of reciprocity would certainly be welcome.

In conclusion, may I make a brief statement in my capacity as the current Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons. In response to the letter circulated at the beginning of our session on 3 August, I have received full replies from 13 delegations, and one reply from the spokesman of a regional group, purporting to speak for its eight members. That makes replies from about half the members of the Committee. I am particularly grateful to those who have responded. In the next few days I would be pleased to be available to those who prefer oral communications and to those who would like to elaborate on their written replies. I would ask those delegations to contact me at the earliest possible point. A formal meeting of the Working Group on Radiological Weapons will be held in the afternoon of 2 September. I intend during that session to report on the views expressed to me and to make suggestions for the further course of work.