

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

for the establishment of an organizational set-up which would give a privileged position to the developed nations at the expense of the developing countries. We realize the existing inequalities in the present-day world but cannot support their being institutionalized through international agreements.

In case the States with highly developed chemical industries find it difficult to accept the notion of an executive council in which some of them might not be represented, the solution could perhaps lie in starting with an executive council which is larger than the 15 member body that has often been mentioned. Simultaneously the convention could provide for an increase in the membership of the Executive Council once the total number of States parties goes beyond a certain figure. Another solution could be to fix the membership of the executive council at a certain percentage of the total number of States parties to the convention. A figure between 30 and 40 per cent should be considered as adequate. This would allow for automatic expansion in the executive council membership as the convention is acceded to by more and more States. Such solutions would be equitable and allow for a sufficient number of developed countries to be always represented in the executive council in order to protect their special interests.

The question of decision-taking is an important element in determining the effectiveness of the bodies set up under the convention. The consensus principle, by giving everyone virtually the right to veto, would be a prescription for paralysis, especially in situations where a decision or action is most required. On the other hand a significant number of States may be highly reluctant to accept decisions by a simple majority, especially in so far as substantive matters are concerned. There is also the additional question of determining as to what is substantive and what is procedural. The dilemma could be resolved by basing all decisions, procedural and substantive, on a qualified majority. Such a solution would not only be unambiguous but also have the merit of being simple and efficient. My delegation has explained this approach in a working paper submitted last year. We realize that the suggestion may be considered unconventional but we should not be afraid of breaking new ground if it signals improvement over past practice and contributes towards our goal of achieving an effective and efficient convention.

The future chemical weapons convention must also lay down procedures for resolving doubts, apprehensions and complaints about non-compliance. These would, however, have to be carefully balanced. While on the one hand they impinge on the sensitive issue of national sovereignty, they are essential, on the other hand, to ensure a healthy respect for the convention. The fact-finding procedures should thus be devised in a manner which operates as a safety net around the convention. The convention while acknowledging the value of clarifying suspicions and ambiguities through bilateral means should provide for a graduated, though not necessarily rigid, framework for resolving doubts through the machinery to be established under it.

While any breach would be a grave development, use of chemical weapons should be treated as the most serious violation of the convention. It is essential that a separate procedure is provided in the convention for expeditiously dealing with allegations of use of chemical weapons.

In the less than perfect world in which we live, inter-State relations often tend to be characterized by mistrust, mutual rivalries and competing interests. So long as the current situation obtains, efforts at having a