

(Mr. von Stulpnagel, Federal Republic of Germany)

measures are of the same routine nature. Thirdly, challenge inspections may indeed be considered confrontational as they might imply an allegation of non-compliance. However, all inspections are in a way accusatory, as they can be interpreted as indicating disbelief in declarations made by States parties. Fourthly, the nature of challenge inspections is a matter of perception. Perceptions, as we all know, may differ between individuals. In any event challenge inspections must be considered a right and be accepted as an integral and indispensable element of the verification system. Finally, verification is intended to build confidence. Thus challenge inspections must also be perceived as a legitimate means to this end.

In considering and evaluating the elements I have just enumerated, one might wonder whether indeed the word "challenge" is consistent with the nature of the inspections in question, or whether it should not be replaced by a more neutral term like "inspections on request". A corresponding proposal has - as you will remember - already been made in this room.

I have dwelt on the "routine versus confrontational" issue in order to show that a problem-oriented approach may be helpful in settling some of the long-standing moot points in our discussion. I have raised this problem in order to prevent a situation where, in a field of truly multilateral interest, a field where serious multilateral disarmament is possible and achievable, we are outdistanced by bilateral solutions which, while welcome, raise the question of the capacity of this Conference to achieve the goals for which it was constituted.

Let me now address another facet which has gained significance in the discussion: the question of whether challenge inspections are primarily a bilateral or a multilateral instrument. On this issue especially it seems to me that realism and a sense of proportion are required. Otherwise we may get enveloped in futile "ideological" debate.

Challenge inspections should be considered multilateral, as they are part of a multilateral convention guaranteeing equal rights to each of its parties. Compliance is a concern of all parties. In their implementation, challenge inspections are bilateral, in so far as they are triggered by a request from an individual State party for inspections on the territory of another State party. This seems to be a legitimate procedure, as each State party should be able to seek reassurance if it has doubts about the compliance of another State party. If each State has the right to obtain this reassurance by requesting challenge inspections, this enhances confidence in the convention and is thus beneficial to the multilateral convention régime as a whole.

The "multilateral versus bilateral" issue has been at the heart of the discussions on procedures following submission of the report on the result of a challenge inspection. Diverging views have been expressed on the roles of the Executive Council and the requesting and requested State party with regard to the evaluation of the results of a challenge inspection. In dealing with this issue two basic considerations should be borne in mind. First, it seems unrealistic to assume that the Executive Council, a truly political body consisting of representatives of sovereign States, can be prevented from discussing the report of a challenge inspection communicated to it and