

(Mr. García Moritán, Argentina)

... On that occasion, the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council issued a joint statement which has the merit of being a coherent and consensual review of some of the most urgent problems on the international agenda, among them the problem of chemical weapons. The then President of the Security Council, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, read out the joint statement on behalf of the members of the body that, according to the Charter, "bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security". The statement expressed support for our negotiating efforts to conclude, by the end of 1992, a universal convention - including a verification regime - to definitively prohibit chemical weapons.

The hackneyed phrase to the effect that we can no longer behave as if the situation were one of business as usual seems finally to have acquired real meaning.

Time is short, but I believe that we have all the necessary elements to finish the convention now. To begin with, we consider the Ad Hoc Committee chairmanship of Ambassador von Wagner in itself an element that must be recorded as important for achieving so difficult objective in so brief a time. Allow me, Mr. President, through you to address our colleague Ambassador von Wagner, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, in order to reiterate to him the commitment and unlimited cooperation of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina in taking the final step in our negotiations. Our task, Ambassador von Wagner, cannot be more demanding and its urgency has been recognized by all. However, in saying that the task is urgent, we do not wish to imply that it must be completed hastily. Nevertheless, while fully conscious of the heavy responsibility borne by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, we are also aware that after almost a decade of negotiations all of the elements are on the table and the time has come for the final political decision.

In our view, it is time to assemble the factors of the final equation, to put them in logical order and to submit them to the plenipotentiaries for definitive consideration. The idea, with respect to certain questions, of "leaving them to ripen" - a euphemism which has served to circumvent the absence of political will in the past - will no longer do.

Universal participation is a principle dear to the political and diplomatic tradition of Argentina and Brazil, and consequently we fully support it in this area while recognizing the logical limitations sometimes imposed by political reality. In this regard, we shall continue our endeavours to win more support, every day, every minute, in an effort of diplomatic education to make obvious to all what is already a conviction to most of us here, i.e. that accession to this convention will be good not only for the international community but also, and above all, for everyone in our States individually.