

Mr. BATSANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): First of all I should like to welcome the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Mr. Karhilo, who is here in Geneva. His statement contained a number of important and interesting points. Finland has long since earned praise as an active participant in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, as well as other issues on the agenda of the Conference. It is making a considerable contribution to progress at the negotiations, particularly in the field of verification of chemical disarmament. This is greatly appreciated by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union and Finland have agreed to co-operate in the development of procedures and means of verification, as was announced during M.S. Gorbachev's visit to Finland in October 1989. We hope that such co-operation will be of practical use to our negotiations here in this forum.

Today the Soviet delegation has taken the floor to present working paper CD/966. This is a report on a trial challenge inspection at a military facility conducted last year in the Soviet Union. Trial inspections at industrial enterprises, which were proposed in a Soviet initiative two years ago, have proved useful in the development and "fine tuning" of a system to verify the non-production of chemical weapons. At the same time they have prompted a number of States to think about the advisability of testing other verification procedures under a future convention, and in particular the important procedure of challenge inspection. The Soviet Union has not only supported this idea, but has taken steps to put it into effect.

When selecting a facility for the holding of a trial challenge inspection we bore in mind that under the future convention such an inspection may be conducted at any site or facility in a State party, without the right of refusal on its part. It is felt that the most typical grounds for challenge may be doubt based on the suspected covert storage or production of chemical weapons. Against this background the facility selected for the trial inspection was an arms depot at which chemical weapons are not and have never been stored. The area of the facility is about 3 square kilometres, and the perimeter about 7 kilometres. Located in the area are approximately 100 buildings and structure with a storage capacity equivalent to more than 1,000 railway wagons.

The trial inspection was conducted over a period of five days. The size of the inspection team, including observers, was 20 persons. They included armaments experts, specialists in CW detection and experts from the Soviet delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, who are very familiar with the background of the negotiations on this issue. The team owed its relatively large size to the fact that besides conducting the inspection it had to deal with all the organizational problems connected with the preparations for and the conduct of the inspection. While preparing for the inspection we tried to establish conditions as close as possible to actual ones. However, as this was a national exercise and the first one of its kind, some exceptions had to be made. In particular, the facility management was notified in advance of

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