

(Mr. Azambuja, Brazil)

With regard to the negotiation of the chemical weapons convention, the delegation of Brazil is instructed to contribute, as effectively as possible, to the achievement of the objective of concluding the draft next year. As to the verification regime of the convention, it is our hope that an efficient mechanism is established so that we avoid the creation of a cumbersome and costly organization. Likewise, it seems convenient to avoid unnecessary interference with the civilian industrial activities in our countries. In this sense, we considered as a positive step the offer made by the industry representatives, when they met in Geneva last June, that they would be prepared to accept inspections any time anywhere. Serious consideration should be given to that offer, for it could enable the adoption of random inspections in civil chemical facilities, thus allowing for a simple and less costly mechanism that could, at the same time, serve the verification purposes of the convention.

I also think that an appropriate regime of inspections on request could contribute to our aim. More transparency could be obtained if all countries would accept the concept of inspections on request to their chemical facilities, without the right to refusal. I could not envisage a more transparent and non-discriminatory regime, which could at the same time reduce the number of routine inspections and the costs of the future organization.

Negotiations are starting, I understand, in connection with the composition and functions of the executive council of the future organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. It is of utmost interest to my country that an acceptable agreement is reached that allows for balanced representation of regions, political groups and countries, also taking into account the importance of the chemical industry in the overall context.

It seems to me that after a chemical weapons convention is in force with its verification regime in operation, countries applying other controls and restrictions to international transfers of dual-use chemicals and facilities should suspend them. On the other hand, it would enhance the convention regime and promote universal adherence if reservations to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 could be formally withdrawn when the convention comes into force.

We would receive with great appreciation a formal renunciation by all Latin American countries of all weapons of mass destruction. In our region, more precisely in South America, which is recognized to be the least armed region in the world, economic and social problems are an essential part of collective security. That is why we have to tackle poverty-related questions and request international cooperation to improve our economies and ensure the necessary technology transfers.

At this moment, we are negotiating the chemical weapons convention with renewed enthusiasm, thanks to the positive evolution in the positions of the United States of America and the Soviet Union, which permitted the adoption of an unconditional prohibition of chemical weapons in article I of the draft convention. But besides chemical weapons we continued to debate on important items of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. In this connection, I would like to note the new dimension given to the consideration of item 1, Nuclear test ban.