(Mr. Fischer, German Democratic Republic)

... The prohibition of chemical weapons, a task which can be solved in the near future, ranks prominently on the agenda of this Conference. Another "global zero" solution would be an essential link in the overall process of disarmament. In Berlin, the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty States reaffirmed their determination to do everything they can in order to attain that goal as soon as possible. The value of the Paris Conference regarding the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention at the earliest date will now have to be measured by the readiness of all sides to support practical solutions. Clear signals would be given if, firstly, all States having such weapons were to stop producing them now and were to begin destroying their stocks; and if, secondly, the other countries were to renounce the acquisition of chemical weapons. Such moves would stem the further proliferation of such weapons, both vertically and horizontally, even before a convention is concluded.

We welcome the decision of the Soviet Union to start destroying chemical weapons this year after having stopped their production earlier. The interest in a complete ban on chemical weapons voiced by President George Bush could already be convincingly demonstrated if the United States decided to renounce the further manufacture of binary weapons.

In the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the chairmanship of Ambassador Morel of France, important steps have been taken for the intensification of the talks. Now it appears that it is time for a meeting of the Conference on Disarmament at foreign minister level to set the course for a purposeful effort to complete the convention. The foreign ministers could concentrate on key issues, i.e. challenge inspections, the composition and decision-making of the Executive Council of the future organization for chemical disarmament, and sanctions in cases of violation of the convention. The German Democratic Republic is ready to participate in such a meeting.