

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

phosphoro-organic compounds. A visit by a group of Soviet experts is planned for this autumn to the destruction facility on Johnston Atoll, which in July of this year began actual operations on the destruction of United States chemical weapons.

Discussions continued during the round on matters relating to the implementation of the Wyoming Memorandum. They concerned both the exchange of data which has taken place and the visits already made to Soviet and United States facilities in the context of the Memorandum.

Particular attention was devoted during the round to questions concerning the preparation of a multilateral convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Both sides expressed concern over the slow pace of the negotiations. The delegations reviewed the basic questions still unresolved in order to compare the USSR and United States approaches and to determine the likelihood of the early attainment of consensus in the multilateral negotiations.

Despite being relatively short, the sixteenth round of the bilateral consultations - which, as I have already said, lasted from 7 to 16 August - proved a very rich one from the point of view of both the amount of work accomplished during the ten days and of the results achieved. The parties agreed to conduct the next round of bilateral consultations during the autumn of 1990.

That is the end of the joint information which I was presenting on behalf of the two delegations and now, if I may, I would like to say a few words on my own behalf. First of all, I would like to join those representatives who have already taken official farewell from the distinguished Ambassador of Australia, David Reese, who will shortly be leaving Geneva and undertaking important new functions in his capital. I would like to wish him all the very best and every success. His stay here in Geneva was not a long one, but I think we all felt that Ambassador Reese did very productive work here.

Lastly, in presenting his report on the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Hyltenius informed the Conference that agreement has been reached and that I am to be appointed Chairman of this Ad hoc Committee next year. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all delegations for their support and understanding and, of course, to assure you that if I am indeed to assume this post next year, then I, personally and the Soviet delegation will endeavour to perform its duties with honour.