

(Mr. Lowitz, United States)

Regarding the first issue, the United States has proposed that the locations of chemical weapons stocks and of chemical weapons production facilities be declared within 30 days after a State becomes a party to the convention. In our view this is essential for assessment of whether all stocks and facilities have been declared and thus for ensuring confidence in compliance. It is the key not only to assessing the initial declarations, but also to monitoring the declared stocks and facilities until they are destroyed.

On the second issue, the importance of ensuring that the chemical industry is not misused for chemical weapons purposes has been emphasized by Western, Socialist and Group of 21 delegations alike. The United States strongly supports the approach developed by the United Kingdom. Under this approach the level of verification would depend on the level of risk, and unnecessary interference in civil use of chemicals would be avoided.

As for the third issue, an effective compliance mechanism, including challenge inspection, is an essential safety net. It would supplement the system of routine verification, which should be the principal means for ensuring confidence in compliance. My Government, beginning with an assessment of the verification difficulties unique to chemical weapons and the dangers posed by undeclared stocks and sites, has taken the unprecedented step of proposing to open our country to mandatory inspection anywhere, any time. We are proud of this commitment: it was not an easy one to make. Yet it represents in our view the best and most effective way that we know of to deter possible violations -- by ensuring that suspect activities are promptly dealt with.

These, then, are my delegation's views on where the real problems lie. We would welcome the views of other delegations, so that the negotiations can be focused on the major obstacles to a convention.

The third suggestion for accelerating work on a chemical weapons ban is related to delegations' readiness to negotiate. This means establishing clear positions, responding constructively and promptly to proposals from others, and working co-operatively to develop new, mutually-acceptable solutions. This factor is something of a truism, but I feel compelled to underscore its fundamental importance, because this is perhaps the area of greatest disappointment for my delegation. The United States has established detailed positions. It has responded to numerous questions. And it has made clear that the United States proposals have not been presented on a "take-it-or-leave-it" basis.

Unfortunately, the actions of the delegation of the Soviet Union give us the impression that the Soviet Union is not yet prepared to negotiate with the United States or others in this Conference. There is no point in speculating here about the reasons that may lie behind this unresponsiveness. The regrettable fact is that detailed substantive responses to proposals from us and others have not been made.