

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

It is to this end that the efforts of Czechoslovakia and the other Warsaw Treaty States are directed. At the Bucharest meeting of the supreme body of that organization, the Political Consultative Committee, last month, we took a stand on topical matters relating to disarmament and security-building in Europe and world-wide. We emphasized the need to take concrete measures both in the nuclear and chemical fields and also in the field of conventional weapons. The decisions adopted there are realistic and constructive. They open up new prospects for the attainment of mutually acceptable solutions in all respects.

CD/PV.527

6

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

... The Conference has once again accomplished useful work this year. However, we must say frankly that we had expected more, both as to the drafting of the text of the convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons and as to consideration of the complex of nuclear disarmament issues.

The issue of prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons is for us a matter of top priority. We do not deny that we placed substantial hopes in the implementation of the suggestions embodied in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, at which all the participants at a high political level affirmed their readiness to conclude a global convention which would ban these barbarous weapons of mass destruction once and for all and called for the expeditious resolution of the outstanding issues with the participation of all the States concerned. Although the work on the text of the draft convention has been intensified and a certain amount of progress has been made in the consideration of the technical and legal aspects, the differences of principle in approaches to certain crucial issues have still not been overcome at this year's session of the Conference in Geneva. Therefore, we are calling once again for political will and creative efforts to find mutually acceptable solutions. The results of the latest round of Soviet-American talks on chemical weapons are a good sign in this respect.

Czechoslovakia will continue to work actively for the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. The essence of our approach is set forth in the statement issued by the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on 5 January this year, in which we stressed our readiness to be one of the first signatories of the convention as soon as it is finalized; we are already undertaking steps to this end domestically.

At the end of January we successfully carried out a national experiment to verify non-production of chemical weapons in the civilian chemical industry. It demonstrated that under present conditions in our economy verification based on the already agreed measures is basically feasible. It does not disrupt the production process in any major way, and the safeguarding of commercial secrets may be incorporated into it. We informed the participants in the Conference on Disarmament of the results of the experiment as early as April last.