

(Mr. Shannon, Canada)

We are convinced that if we can develop a fully effective verification régime - one that incorporates both a rigorous challenge inspection component and an ad hoc verification component - we will have leapt over perhaps the biggest remaining hurdle to the realization of the convention. There are, as indicated, a number of other major problems that are critical to ensuring the globality and comprehensiveness of the convention, but we believe that they, too, can be best addressed through a constructive and open-minded attitude. My delegation therefore entertains high hopes for the fruitfulness of our forthcoming intersessional discussions and during the next session, accentuated somewhat by the tang of our disappointment with the limited results of the current session.

To assist in these future deliberations, my delegation will soon be circulating, through the secretariat, two further papers for consideration by other delegations in the months to come. The first of these is a study that addresses the issue of the costs of maintaining an international inspectorate. This study, which was conducted by an expert consultant on behalf of the Verification Research Unit of the Department of External Affairs and International Trade, Canada, builds upon the very useful work done some years ago by the Netherlands and United Kingdom delegations, as well as others, and also takes into account more recent data that have become available, particularly about stockpiles and facilities.

For each type of inspection or other verification activity envisaged under the convention, the study posits a series of assumptions about the number of sites involved, the likely size and tasks of the inspection team, the number of days required to complete those tasks, and the possible unit cost of each inspector, and thereby calculates the costs of each form of inspection and the cumulative cost of maintaining the inspectorate. I should like to underline that, in positing such assumptions, the study by no means intends to suggest that the figures cited should be regarded as categorical or definitive. Nor, indeed, do such assumptions represent the judgement of the Canadian Government on what such figures should be. But they do represent a serious attempt, on our part at least, to begin to make educated estimates of the general scale of the effort required. As such, they are intended to engender reflection, further discussion and debate. It is therefore our hope that this study will be considered useful and will help further discussion of the financial implications of the verification régime envisaged under the convention.

The second study that we will be circulating examines and assesses procedures for toxicity determination. This is an internal study that was carried out to assist the Canadian Government and our delegation in determining how to address this topic when and if it arose again in our negotiations. While this topic is not currently being addressed in discussions, it underlies many of the technical aspects that are still under consideration. We believe that the results of our study are interesting and warrant being shared with other delegations in order to assist negotiators in reaching a rational approach to the question of toxicity.