

(Mr. Negretto Cambiaso, Italy)

... The new impetus to the chemical weapons negotiations is the result of a tragic event, as a war always is, from which an innumerable set of lessons were drawn; and I would like to refrain from adding any further to it. We are now facing a new reality. It is encouraging to see that many former obstacles have been swept away. What is most important is the positive reality that has emerged from the tragedy of the war, resulting in a renewed role for the international community, not merely of a declaratory nature, to reaffirm legality against violence. We are faced now with an extraordinary opportunity to consolidate this yet fragile new dimension for the role of the international community. We should secure all its implications, as it not only represents the very foundation of the convention and of its future organization; but also because of the urgency, on a more general outlook, to provide credible and acceptable frameworks to ensure stability, while former strategic balances are breaking down.

Our debate on article IX is important in itself as well as for some of its implications of a more general nature. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, to whom I would like to convey the sympathy and appreciation of the Italian delegation, has therefore been right in devoting prior attention to the issue, against the backdrop of the ongoing events of the Gulf War aftermath. The problems yet to be solved on challenge inspection are basically turning around the critical question of striking the right balance between the protection of the legitimate interests of a State (security and confidentiality) and the need to consolidate the ever-increasing role of the international community through its organs, represented, in the specific case of article IX, by the executive council, the technical secretariat and by the inspection team.

In our view, it is possible to reach a compromise between these requirements, without undermining the prominence of the role of the future organization in fulfilling the main duties it has been entrusted by the convention. The availability of a neutral instrument above parties is useful to ensure and verify compliance but it also represents a guarantee against possible distortions of controls to the detriment of State parties' interests. It would not otherwise make sense to set up a new, costly and complex international organization if controls of the kind foreseen by article IX could be implemented through inter-State mechanisms, such as those existing in the INF, Stockholm and CFE agreements.

Allow me to cite some concrete examples, with regard to the role of the above-mentioned three organs, beginning with the director-general of the technical secretariat. He seems already implicitly empowered to check whether the elements of the request are assembled according to the basic procedural requirements listed in part III of the protocol on inspection procedures as annexed to document CD/CW/WP.352, as well as in the relevant section of the "rolling text". Upon notification, the requirement is in fact spelled out that the request should contain, inter alia, "the concern regarding compliance