

would request the party whose actions were suspect to clarify these actions. If the clarification provided still did not resolve the question, the fact-finding panel of the Executive Council would immediately begin an investigation. The report of its investigation would then be made available to all parties to the convention. If still unsatisfied, the inquiring party could initiate a special meeting of the Consultative Committee to consider further the compliance question.

It is hoped that most compliance questions can be resolved through information exchanges that occur either bilaterally or through the Consultative Committee. However, in some instances assurances more persuasive than the uncorroborated statements of a party will be necessary. In other cases, the assurance will be required more rapidly than the time periods contained in article IX. Articles X and XI of the draft convention were designed to meet the needs of such situations.

Under article X of the draft convention, procedures for special on-site inspection will apply to any facility either already subject to systematic international on-site inspection pursuant to other articles of the convention or to any facility or location owned or controlled by the government of a party, including military facilities. Annex II would contain provisions aiding in the specification of such facilities and locations. For these locations and facilities, a party to the convention is deemed to have issued an "open invitation" with regard to the possibility of their inspection. This means that a party must permit an on-site inspection of the location or facility within 24 hours of receipt of a request from a member of the fact-finding panel for such an investigation. Members of the panel could initiate such an inspection on their own or on behalf of a party not represented on the panel. A party cannot refuse a request for a special on-site inspection.

My Government recognizes that these special on-site inspection procedures will require an unprecedented degree of openness on the part of all countries that become parties to the convention. The United States also recognizes that such openness could potentially pose a risk to sensitive activities not related to chemical weapons. However, the United States strongly believes that a comprehensive and effective ban on chemical weapons, which would provide substantial security benefits, must, if it is to be truly effective, contain an "open invitation" inspection scheme along the lines I have sketched out today. Thus, the United States has decided that the benefits flowing from such an inspection scheme greatly outweigh the risks.

The United States seriously considers that any risks can be minimized and managed through appropriate procedures for initiating and conducting special on-site inspections. The United States draft contains a number of provisions designed to do just that. In the United States view, the inspection procedures should be designed to resolve the issue at the lowest possible level of intrusion. For example, the inspectors' access should be unimpeded, but the procedures could stipulate that the least intrusive steps be taken first. More intrusive steps would be implemented only to the level needed to resolve the specific issue in question. We would welcome other suggestions for minimizing the risks that might result from a special on-site inspection.

I want to assure all delegations in the Conference on Disarmament that my Government did not take the decision lightly to include this "open invitation" provision in our draft convention. There should be no question that the United States is willing to accept the consequences of these provisions. I hope that other States will display a like amount of political will and accept this "open invitation" concept, because it is essential for an effective chemical-weapons ban.

I would also like to respond to some criticisms that have been publicly voiced concerning the article X provision on special on-site inspection. The statement has been made that, since the provision applies to government-owned or government-controlled facilities, it discriminates against some economic and political systems. The argument