

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

Among the items on the agenda, the prohibition of chemical weapons is considered as one with a better chance for real progress. On this issue, as some delegates put it, there might be "a ray of hope" -- a phrase which reflects the views of many delegates. Although the outcome of the three-week discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons was not that satisfactory, the deliberations have nevertheless deepened understanding of the views of the parties concerned and further identified the differences. This may facilitate the resolution of the differences through negotiations in the days to come. Furthermore, the views of different parties on the question of the timing of the declaration of the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles seem to be converging. All these are indeed positive signs. I wish to express once more our thanks to the Chairman of the Working Group, Ambassador McPhail of Canada, and the co-ordinators of the contact groups for their efforts. Like many other delegations, we also hope that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons will be re-established at an early date by the current session of the Conference on Disarmament so as to expedite negotiations on the formulation of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Morelli Pando, Peru)

To refer briefly to the programme of work, and concentrating on the most significant aspect of the operative part of General Assembly resolution 38/183 I, approved by an overwhelming majority of countries, the Peruvian delegation considers that working groups on the prevention of nuclear war and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be established urgently. Similarly, my delegation considers that negotiations should begin as soon as possible on a draft international nuclear-test-ban treaty, and also, that the necessary steps should be taken to speed up work on the elaboration of an international convention for the complete and effective prohibition of all chemical weapons and for the destruction of all such existing weapons.

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to a view which my delegation shares with other delegations: not all the basic issues can be negotiated simultaneously in this Conference; but some of them, already identified, should be considered urgently and in depth. We already have a valuable example to follow on other items of our agenda: the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons has enabled us to demonstrate that a pragmatic approach to the items under consideration, and intensive, albeit slow, work on the substantive aspects of each of those items, may pave the way for substantial progress and prepare the necessary conditions for beginning negotiations on international legal instruments.