

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

... Like the delegations of many other States, the Soviet delegation sincerely hopes that during the summer session of the Conference on Disarmament we will succeed in translating the results of the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons into real progress at the negotiations within the framework of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, making it possible to prepare a convention on the subject for signature at the earliest date. The efforts of the representative of France, Ambassador Morel, to attain that goal deserve the highest appreciation. We trust that with active and constructive participation by all member States of the Conference on Disarmament and observers in the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons we shall be able shortly to reach agreement on a general system of verification of compliance with the future convention, resolve outstanding issues relating to the régime of authorized synthesis and production of schedule [1] chemicals, and move forward in resolving the issues of economic co-operation and development (article XI) and assistance in the event of the use of chemical weapons (article X). As for verification of compliance with the convention, in our view it should be based on a combination of systematic international verification and challenge inspections of any site or facility without the right of refusal. On this understanding we will not object to the proposal made by a number of States that no specific mention of the activities of national technical means of verification should be made in the convention.

A number of interesting considerations designed to improve the system of verification have recently been set out at the Conference on Disarmament. In particular, in April this year the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, Oskar Fischer, advanced the idea of testing challenge inspection procedures. We are also studying with interest the working paper introduced by the delegation by the United Kingdom containing the first results of such trial inspections carried out in that country. For my part I wish to inform you that the USSR is also carrying out a national experiment related to challenge inspections, within the framework of which one visit to a military storage facility has already taken place. A summary of the results of this experiment will be presented at the negotiations.

Since the Soviet delegation intends to make a separate statement on the problems involved in the prohibition of chemical weapons, I shall refrain from a more detailed presentation of our views on this issue now, and limit myself to just one additional remark. Like all other delegations of member States of the Conference on Disarmament, we welcome the active interest in the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons on the part of a great number of countries, and note with satisfaction that the number of countries now

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