

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

While very little work remains on article VII, much more should be done to start preparations for its implementation as the convention now approaches its completion. Regional efforts to publicize the forthcoming convention and its implications for the States parties on the national level play a very constructive role in this context. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of my Government of the initiative that led to the regional workshop recently held in Mexico City under the auspices of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The "rolling text" with regard to article VIII has been cleaned up considerably. The core issues that remain to be solved are the composition, functions and decision-making of the executive council. How can we strike the right balance between representativity and efficiency of the executive council? It goes without saying that all States parties must be eligible for the executive council. This is not enough, however. The number of members of the council and the length of their term of office should also guarantee all States parties the possibility of serving on the council at reasonable intervals. This would undoubtedly be one important factor contributing to the universal adherence that we are all striving for. At the same time we must ensure that the efficiency of the council is not hampered. Therefore, my delegation suggests that 25-30 States parties be elected by the conference of the States parties for a two-year term. Furthermore, we suggest that provision be made for the possibility of enlarging the council at a later stage, if and when it is deemed appropriate.

The basis for the allocation of seats should be the need to ensure balanced geographical representation. However, other interests must also be reflected when composing the structure of the executive council. Political factors and the size of national chemical industries are also relevant. These interests should, at least to some extent, be taken into account within each regional group as it considers its internal allocation of seats.

It is necessary to apply a nuanced approach to the problem of inspections under article IX. This article should cover a whole spectrum, from consultations and requests for clarification on matters of compliance with the convention to requests for on-site inspections, which may be either undramatic or more or less confrontational. That is why my delegation has proposed using the term "inspections on request". It is evident from the discussion that a deliberate choice to make on-site inspections under article IX confrontational - as the term "challenge" implies - also inevitably puts more emphasis on the question of abuse.

It has been argued that if a violation cannot be proven the request should be considered an abuse of the convention. This is, of course, a grossly oversimplified view, but it may serve to deter any State party from requesting on-site inspections under this article unless it is practically 100 per cent sure that a suspected violation can be proven. Such an outcome