

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States)

weapons by multinational corporations on the territory of a State not a party to the convention is a special problem. Any corporation incorporated under United States law, wherever its activities actually take place, would be prohibited from aiding a non-party in chemical weapons production. In the United States view, the real question of relevance to all parties is activities related to the convention taking place on the territories of States that are not parties to that instrument, regardless of who is conducting them. The source of the problem, in fact, is apt to be the Government of the non-party State. In such a case, political pressure, including pressure to join the convention, would be the appropriate response. The Soviet approach to dealing with activities on the territory of non-party States is not at all clear at this time. Our delegation would ask the Soviet Union to present its own position so that we may study it.

To date, only two countries -- the United States and the Soviet Union -- have stated that they possess chemical weapons. There are approximately 15 other States that are believed to possess, or to be seeking to acquire, chemical weapons. It is of considerable concern to the United States that some of these States might remain outside the convention and continue to possess chemical weapons after States parties destroy their deterrent stocks. Such States would pose a risk to States parties. Clearly, such a situation would affect the United States decision on ratification, and, I am sure, other countries' as well. We should focus our attention here in this forum on measures that can be taken to reduce this risk.

The United States statement of 23 April proposed that confidence-building in this area start with greater openness on the part of all members of the Conference on Disarmament. It expressed concern that some other States participating in these negotiations have been secretive about their chemical weapons programmes, and noted that confidence is seriously undermined when countries possessing such weapons refuse to acknowledge such capabilities during the negotiations.

Several countries have indicated that they do not possess chemical weapons. However, many States members of this body have remained silent on this issue. Our delegation calls upon its negotiating partners to indicate whether or not they possess chemical weapons and chemical weapon production facilities. We also request the Soviet Union, and others who may acknowledge possession of chemical weapons, to provide detailed information on their chemical weapons capabilities, as the United States has already done. The United States raised this point with the Soviet Union three years ago, but no response has been received. We are hopeful this information and data will be forthcoming during current bilateral talks which began this week. Serious intentions of progress on both sides have been expressed. We believe data exchange can be the keystone of such progress.

Greater openness should also apply to commercial industrial information. As the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, Minister of State David Mellor, remarked in his plenary statement on 14 July, "What we need is not more speeches, but more facts and figures. We need to know what other Governments have, where they have it and what they do with it". My delegation