

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

And, last but not least, we are encouraged by the report on the current state of negotiations presented on Tuesday. The outgoing Chairman of the CW Committee, Ambassador Morel, deserves our appreciation and gratitude for his committed and creative guidance of the negotiations.

The time seems ripe to get down to the final drafting of the convention - i.e. to focus work on the still outstanding essentials and on completing the articles: They encompass, in our view, verification measures, the order of destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities, agreements on assistance in the event of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons as well as in economic and technological development, the definition of chemical weapons and the composition of the future executive council of the organization. A good many expandable starting-points were provided in the informal consultations on such key issues last year.

Now we think it is imperative to take decisions. It will certainly be no easy job, but it will be possible. As experience in other disarmament forums shows, a meeting of the Geneva Disarmament Conference at foreign minister level would be appropriate to give a powerful boost in this regard. An informal discussion on this matter would be worth while.

The provisions to be agreed on the verification of a chemical weapons ban are of special interest. In our opinion, such a verification system should, first, reliably guarantee that no chemical weapons are produced and that they will never be developed again. Secondly, it must be cost-effective and ensure reliable verification with the most efficient means. Thirdly, it must be feasible. And fourthly it should not lay unnecessary burdens on the chemical industry. Legitimate scientific, technological and commercial interests need to be taken into account.

Challenge inspections in cases of violation of the agreements have occupied a central spot in the disarmament accords at least since the conclusion of the INF Treaty. They constitute an important element of confidence-building and effective verification. This also goes for the prohibition of chemical weapons, for which the German Democratic Republic is ready to agree to radical verification provisions. We think that efforts are already needed, at the national level too, to determine which legislative and administrative measures can ensure that the comprehensive obligations under the convention are fulfilled correctly and on schedule. In the end, all efforts towards a chemical weapons ban hinge on a world-wide consensus that precludes any use of chemical weapons, stops their production and proliferation and reliably guarantees their complete destruction within a period of 10 years. If this was actually achieved, it would fulfil, at long last, a demand which the peoples raised 75 years ago under the spell of the lethal gas cloud of Ypres.