

(Mr. Busby, United States)

Having pointed to these positive aspects of our work, I must admit at this point that my delegation is, however, somewhat frustrated. We shared the general optimism that existed at the beginning of the 1983 session, when it was widely believed that great things were possible. Our Vice-President visited the Committee, and we introduced a comprehensive document designed to help intensify the work of the Committee. Later we introduced another major paper and brought a number of experts to Geneva. We participated actively and constructively in the deliberations. And yet, an effective ban is not much closer today than it was a year ago. We should determine the factors which may be responsible for this lack of progress.

Most importantly, some key delegations have not been sufficiently prepared or willing to take an active part in discussion of some of the main issues. This fact has been pointed out eloquently in recent statements by the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands and today the distinguished Ambassador of the United Kingdom. My delegation is also deeply concerned about this development. In order to negotiate, delegations must know each other's views.

For our part, we note there has as yet been no detailed reaction by certain key delegations to either of the major papers we have put forward this year. Nor has there been any detailed response to the important proposals made by the Federal Republic of Germany in document CD/326 and the United Kingdom in document CD/353. Only in the last week, when the work of the contact group on stockpiles had been completed, did the Soviet delegation begin to clarify for the Committee its proposal for verification of stockpile destruction by inspection on a quota basis. It must be remembered that they made this proposal over a year ago, and questions about it have been on the table ever since.

Furthermore, my delegation cannot understand why the Soviet delegation, which ardently professes its interest in completing a convention as soon as possible, refuses to discuss the subject of chemical weapons production and filling facilities. When the Working Group took up this issue, that delegation remained totally silent, neither presenting its own position nor responding to questions from others. The statement of the Soviet delegation on 18 August made quite clear their view that this subject should not even be discussed until all other issues have been resolved. We do not see how such an attitude can help accelerate the Committee's work.

Moreover, a hardening of the Soviet position has been quite noticeable in the last few weeks. We have discovered that matters thought to be agreed, for example, in Contact Groups B and D, are apparently no longer acceptable to the delegation of the Soviet Union.

My delegation is also very disturbed about the failure of the Committee to re-establish the Chemical Weapons Working Group promptly at the beginning of the 1983 session. Matters totally irrelevant to the work on a Chemical Weapons ban were allowed to intrude. Two months of potential work were lost. This must not be allowed to happen again.

In addition, we are concerned that at this session there was a proliferation of meetings, and increasing formality took the place of a more productive form of work. To some extent we seem to be substituting the appearance of activity for real negotiation.