

(Mr. Morel, France)

Specifically I believe that after a year of intensive work on all aspects of the convention we can and must begin to regard the convention as a whole which has already begun to settle into coherence and balance. By the same token, that which remains to be done can in a way be identified in terms of the edifice already built. By proceeding thus by deduction we will be better able to single out the most important areas on which real decisions have to be taken.

Does this mean that the completion of the negotiations now depends only on a few political decisions? I am not convinced of that. At the risk of repeating myself, the experience of the session now coming to an end leads me to observe that politics and technical matters cannot be completely dissociated. Certainly we should avoid getting bogged down in perfectionism or secondary considerations, but we should also beware of believing that we can find a sort of "leg-up" to overcome real difficulties. Yet the approach we have developed little by little together in the course of this year offers two interesting and complementary directions for the last phase of our work. It is a fact that the major questions can be truly settled only if we embark on in-depth work, where the precision of what is known as technical work necessarily has a place. But it is equally true that a number of other technical issues related to the smooth application of the convention can, with the agreement of all delegations, be detached from the negotiations proper and settled in parallel, without being deferred until later.

In the course of this session, we have also better appreciated to what extent the convention had to be universal and hence benefit from accession by all States, to begin with by enabling all States wishing to contribute to negotiations to do so. This broadening of the negotiating work has been the result of more active involvement of delegations of member States and at the same time a broader, more resolute contribution on the part of delegations of non-member States. New work habits have appeared, but we can surely move even further in this direction.

This is also the moment to mention the role of those I would call the "new interlocutors" of delegations, who, without directly participating in the negotiations, contribute essential elements - whether these be - first and foremost, of course - experts from industry, with whom an informal but permanent dialogue has now been established, and whose remarkable commitment in the trial inspections already prefigures the operation of the convention, scientific circles, whose vital contribution is better recognized today, the press, non-governmental organizations, and parliamentarians, who will be both our judges and our counterparts in each national legal system. This brief enumeration of so many partners whose role will constantly grow in this final phase of our work leads me to stress to what extent the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, while pursuing its unstinting daily task, should now size up its collective responsibility in respect of the convention. The more the convention appears as a whole which is in the process of being finalized - and it is more complete than it seems at first glance - the more we must be ready to commit ourselves together to bring it to the stage of full implementation. All delegations agree that about a year will be needed to complete the process - if, of course, the momentum is maintained. Since the calendar is no longer at issue, it remains for us to take the measure of all that this