

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

control sector since the Second World War have also been no more than compromises; and for all that, they have helped to preserve or even to strengthen our international security.

Let us take, for example, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This certainly has its glaring faults, not to mention its discriminatory character, which has caused Switzerland, for instance, considerable difficulties in acceding to the Treaty. Let us point out, for example, that among other things the Treaty overlooked the question of technology, though that is so important in this sector. Yet, for all its shortcomings, this Treaty has helped substantially to prevent fulfilment of the serious forecasts of the 1960s that by the end of this century there would be another 30 to 40 nuclear Powers: a situation which, in the view of the Swiss authorities, would have increased neither our own nor, in all likelihood, the world's security.

From what we consider the favourable experience gained with these existing arms control and disarmament instruments, however imperfect they may be, we Swiss draw the following lesson: it is not the detailed rules laid down in these treaties and conventions, however imperfect they may be, that give these instruments their decisive weight; it is primarily the fact that, by bringing them into force, a large proportion of the international community has solemnly espoused the fundamental ideas and principles set forth in these texts, and thus developed human awareness on the lines that those ideas and principles constitute basic rules for our international relations. Today we are in a position to add a further element to that international awareness: the banishment of chemical weapons; and we shall have to add yet more elements even if, each time, they are expressed only by a compromise.

In this spirit we welcome and support the draft treaty on the complete elimination of chemical weapons set forth in document WP.400/Rev.2 and the Swiss Government, as you know, declared together with the other Governments represented at the CSCE that Switzerland would be among the original signatories of this new convention. In that hope, my delegation would have supported the French statement made on Wednesday, 26 August 1992 if we had had an opportunity to do so. On the present occasion, we would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Adolf von Wagner and his delegation and to congratulate them on their admirable work and on the very necessary courage shown in bringing us to this memorable point.

Allow me to close with two very subjective Swiss remarks. Firstly, the reason why this draft treaty on chemical weapons has from the Swiss standpoint, if I may say so, one flaw in its beauty is that it was drawn up, once again, under conditions which did not allow my country to play to the full the role proper to a State that is sovereign and, according to the fundamental rules of international law, equal to all others. My authorities hope that future treaties in this sphere of arms control and disarmament will be drawn up under conditions in keeping with the principles of sovereign equality and democratic common decisions that govern our international society. Secondly, the draft treaty on chemical weapons has now gone beyond the Conference on Disarmament stage. From now on, everything that has to be done for this convention and its future life will have to be done by its