

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

destruction process exclusively from their own military perspective. The process should begin very soon after the convention enters into force, if not before it, and should be completed at the quickest possible pace under international supervision. It is absolutely essential, in this regard, to define chemical-weapon production facilities in a manner that does not impinge upon or interfere with the peaceful chemical industry in any country. As a non-aligned and non-chemical-weapon State, we find it difficult to appreciate the spending of valuable time over working out agreed destruction schedules whose central objective appears to be to ensure that the security of the two alliance systems is not put in jeopardy during the elimination process. When viewed in the light of the fact that the security of the two is not based on chemical weapons but on nuclear arsenals, this debate appears somewhat unnecessary. In our view the destruction process should provide for the elimination of chemical-weapon production facilities ahead of chemical weapon stockpiles. Similarly newer stocks should be destroyed before the older ones. Further, a 10-year period should not necessarily be required to complete the elimination process. It should be possible for States possessing chemical weapons to eliminate their stockpiles and production facilities in a period considerably less than 10 years.

The issue of establishing confidence in compliance with the future chemical weapons convention lies at the heart of our negotiations. Consequently provisions relating to verification and compliance, which would in any case constitute the backbone of the convention, would have to construct a régime which ensures that undertakings relating to destruction, non-production and non-acquisition were complied with. Given the limitations of the existing capabilities as well as the misgivings attached with too intrusive a verification régime, 100 per cent effective compliance machinery does not appear within the realm of possibility. This, however, does not mean that a verification régime containing a mix of national and international means of an intrusive nature cannot be arrived at. It is clear to us that the type and intrusiveness of verification to which an activity is subjected should be determined by the element of risk which that particular activity posed for the convention.

It would perhaps be too simplistic to base a vitally important international convention only on the premise that States would adhere to it in good faith and with the intention of abiding by its provisions. Trust blended with mutual self-interest, therefore, seems a better basis for an agreement. In our view it would be in the general interest to ensure compliance through an effective and equitable verification system and an efficacious and non-discriminatory complaints procedure duly supported by a viable organizational structure.

A general understanding appears to exist that the future chemical weapons convention should provide for the establishment of a consultative committee -- a body composed of all the States parties -- as the principal organ responsible for overseeing the implementation of the convention. A consensus also seems to prevail that the Consultative Committee should have as its main subsidiary organ an executive council, a body composed of a fixed number of States which remains permanently in session and exercises authority delegated to it by the Consultative Committee. My delegation believes that the organization and functioning of these bodies should be arranged in a manner that ensures their effectiveness without compromising the principle of sovereign equality, which is an essential basis on which States adhere to international agreements. We disagree in this regard with arguments calling