

(Mr. Batsanov, USSR)

balances between the interests of the negotiating States over the entire subject-matter of the negotiations. Indeed, today the question of the future convention is increasingly taking on a political dimension. The time is coming for responsible, principled solutions, which probably cannot be arrived at solely through the language of the draft Convention and the annexes.

We therefore support the idea of convening, in the relatively near future, a special meeting of the Conference on Disarmament at the level of Foreign Ministers, about which the Ambassador of France, Mr. Pierre Morel, in particular recently spoke so convincingly. We believe that the purpose of meeting should be to overcome the remaining obstacles in the way of the convention. At such a meeting the ministers could, for example, approve the main provisions of the convention and give delegations instructions to finalize as soon as possible the necessary technical documents and annexes to the convention so that the draft could be opened for signature by Heads of State or Government before the end of 1991.

Sometimes doubts are expressed about whether it is advisable to convene a ministerial meeting if it does not go beyond repeating old positions and making general appeals while the problems would remain unresolved. In our view, a meeting of that kind is, indeed, unnecessary. But what is being talked about is a productive meeting. For that, we feel, there must be agreement in principle as soon as possible on beginning the practical preparations for a meeting having as its focus the development of a package of understandings of principle.

Let us consider the following scenario. Although I am not certain that it is altogether the correct one, perhaps it may be advisable to ask the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Hyltenius, who this year made such a tangible contribution to our negotiations, to initiate as of now consultations on the question of convening a ministerial meeting so that definite decisions could be reached in New York.

Of course, an essential, but by no means the only condition for the success of a ministerial meeting is that we should all understand clearly exactly what we expect from the convention and what problems we want to resolve through it. It goes without saying that for anyone to be without instructions for protracted periods does not facilitate negotiations. There is a Russian proverb: seven persons do not wait for only one. And here we sometimes find ourselves in a situation where seventy parties must wait for one. But this seems to be our fate at multilateral negotiations.

The work carried out by the Ad hoc Committee this year has, in our view, helped to identify clearly enough the set of problems on which political solutions are needed. These include: the verification system and, first of all, challenge and ad hoc inspections, ensuring the universality of the future convention, the question of non-use of chemical weapons, as well as assistance in protection against chemical attacks; co-operation in peaceful chemistry; and sanctions. In addition to these problems, but somewhat separate from them, are the question of the composition of the Executive Council of the international organization and the question of its financing. I should like to dwell on some of these issues.