

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

On 25 July I made a statement in this forum on the negotiations of a chemical weapons convention and on the difficulties in devising measures to be applied to the different chemicals involved. Today, I have asked for the floor to introduce a working paper containing the ideas presented in the statement of 25 July.

For the purpose of the Convention, the relevant chemicals have in CD/539 been divided into five categories, i.e. super-toxic lethal, other lethal and other harmful chemicals, key precursors including key components for binary and multicomponent chemical systems for chemical weapons, and precursors. This has proved to be a very useful categorization. However, attempts to apply one and the same set of measures to all relevant chemicals in each one of the five categories have failed.

There is now a growing recognition that the diversity within a category and the different purposes for which these chemicals are produced need to be taken into account when elaborating the measures to be applied, in order not to hamper the development of the peaceful chemical industry, while at the same time ensuring that chemicals are not produced for chemical-weapons purposes. There is also concern that one and the same chemical might be subject to qualitatively different measures depending on the purpose of its production and that this might create "loopholes" in the Convention. The time has therefore come to refine the concepts somewhat and to look for alternative ways of structuring the relationship between the categories of chemicals and the measures to be applied to them.

In the statement in July, my delegation suggested a comprehensive approach for dealing with all the chemicals relevant to the Convention. This alternative approach allows for bringing together chemicals from different categories under one and the same régime, as well as for applying different régimes to different chemicals within one and the same category. This could be achieved through a regrouping of the chemicals without in any way changing the definitions and the five categories already agreed upon.

Such a regrouping also opens the way for a comprehensive way of dealing with the chemicals, so that one and the same chemical would be subject to the same régime in all parts of the Convention (i.e., as regard declarations, elimination, permitted production and verification). The philosophy of the approach is simple. Based on existing definitions, the chemicals are arranged in three groups. For each group a régime for the declarations, elimination, production and verification is devised. Régime I is the most stringent and demanding one and applies to all Group I chemicals. Régime II is also stringent but somewhat less burdensome and applies to all the Group II chemicals. Régime III is the least stringent of the three and applies to the Group III chemicals.

A number of delegations have been in contact with my delegation to express their interest in and to discuss various aspects of this approach. In order to facilitate further study by delegations of the issues involved and to assist in the search for a possible solution of the problems encountered in the Committee, my delegation is today tabling a working paper, CD/632, outlining the suggested comprehensive approach. It is my hope that it will prove useful for the negotiations.