

Mr. LYONS (Ireland):

... The Conference on Disarmament is approaching the end of a very important and productive session. The finalization of the draft convention outlawing chemical weapons is an achievement of the utmost importance for the international community. Failure to conclude the convention this year would only have had serious implications, both for the Conference and for the international community as a whole. It would have signalled an inability on the part of the Conference to take advantage of an international environment unprecedentedly favourable to progress on disarmament, and would thereby have raised serious questions about its credibility. We hope the convention will point the way to further disarmament measures. The system of international monitoring which it puts in place is unprecedented in its scope, and the willingness of so many countries to accept such a system is very encouraging. My Government would have wished to see a verification system even more intrusive than that for which the draft convention provides. That however is not to take away from what has been accomplished. In view of the different approaches and interests which had to be reconciled, the final outcome as represented in the text appended to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee is a remarkable one. My delegation can fully endorse the statement by Ambassador Errera in the Ad Hoc Committee on 26 August. Ambassador von Wagner

(continued)