

(Mr. Rodriguez Navarro, Venezuela)

We hope that the results of this new stage will exceed expectations, to the benefit of all.

Agenda item 4, entitled "Chemical weapons", is another of the topics to which we should give special attention during this short summer session.

The Working Group on Chemical Weapons, which has been meeting since 20 July, offers fairly encouraging prospects since a minimum degree of consensus has been reached on some points on which there were diverging views.

Working document CD/220, submitted by the Chairman of the Group, has given rise to comments and specific proposals from countries which are active in the discussions on the revision of the Elements (document CD/CW/WP.33).

This stage is a positive one in the preparation of a draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. However, in that connection, it must be borne in mind that the future convention should not merely be a tenuous supplement to the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925, but an instrument which extends the scope of its content and eradicates once and for all the inhuman use of such weapons. At the same time, it should be an agreement which prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and/or transfer of chemical products for military purposes. In addition, it must provide effective machinery for the elimination of existing stocks and installations for non-peaceful purposes.

With regard to the controversial aspect of verification of the implementation of the provisions of the future convention and subsequent compliance with its provisions, my country considers it appropriate to provide adequate means for national measures of verification using modern methods selected by the sovereign State. Provision should be made for scientific international verification where necessary, provided that this does not prejudice the security of any State and that it forms an element of international aid and co-operation in ensuring strict compliance with the convention by the nations which adhere to it, in the cause of peace.

At this crucial and difficult stage of the work of the Ad Hoc Group on Chemical Weapons, we must not allow any dilution of the results already achieved and, more important, political will must not be allowed to be conspicuous by its absence in these decisive discussions.

Another area of concern to my country is the militarization of outer space and the placing of satellites in synchronous geostationary orbit, to the point of saturation, for purposes that are not exactly peaceful. This directly affects the security of all countries and particularly that of the equatorial countries.