

(Mr. de la Baume, France)

The French document, on the other hand, proposes that a State that continues to possess or wishes to possess chemical weapons for the 10-year period alone should be compelled to say so and to open its entire territory to inspection, with the security stock -- and the production unit -- being subject to more detailed verification.

These provisions, far, as we see it, from encouraging proliferation, should lead all States to forsake ambiguity; that is a restraint on proliferation. In this connection we must reject the idea that our proposals would be tantamount to changing the existing status quo in a manner conducive to proliferation. The current reality is indeed that there exist States which possess chemical weapons on the one hand and States which do not on the other; but nothing proves that, as the representative of the Soviet Union contends, the entry into force of the convention would ipso facto result in the elimination of this difference. We believe that that will be true only when all arsenals and all means of production have been destroyed -- and that, if everything happens as envisaged in the convention, will only be the case 10 years after the convention comes into force.

Those are a few comments that the French delegation wished to make at this juncture.