

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

My delegation had presented these views against the background of growing apprehension among the population of the Federal Republic of Germany, for whom the prospect of any future use of chemical weapons is particularly terrifying.

Since then, Ambassador Issraelyan has spoken on 18 and 22 August to refute these affirmations. He furthermore submitted a number of technical proposals which my delegation has carefully studied. We have also observed the Soviet delegation's participation in the drafting of the "recording" and of the report of the session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons. We have examined the Soviet presentations as attentively and objectively as possible. As a result I must state that I can in no respect retract from my statement of 11 August. The position of the Soviet delegation in the recording exercise and the silence on key issues continue to cast doubt on its repeated professions of interest in the speedy completion of the convention.

Our assessment has been reinforced by the impression that there is a hardening of the Soviet line, most markedly as regards the degree of stringency of the obligation to submit to on-site inspections in cases of challenge. Here the Soviet delegation seems to be retreating from positions which we had hoped they had accepted.

There is nothing wrong in analysing critically each other's positions. It is the right attitude towards criticism that counts. The critical remarks of the Soviet delegation on our own negotiating posture will also be examined carefully. We shall use their critical suggestions to reflect on an even greater flexibility on all open issues in order to be well prepared for the next round.

I trust that the Soviet delegation will distinguish between such constructive criticism in the interest of a shared objective, and sterile accusations designed to denigrate the adversary and to mask one's own inability to contribute in substance.

Negotiations need the former; they must avoid the latter. I should like to appeal to the Soviet Union to show more flexibility which would allow us to progress quickly in the next negotiating phase, particularly in the key areas of destruction of stocks, destruction of production facilities and compliance. My delegation firmly hopes that the Soviet delegation will honour our appeal to engage in a serious joint endeavour to overcome the obstacles on the way to concluding a ban on this particularly barbarous category of weapons.

We welcome the initiative of the United States delegation to organize a workshop on verification issues relating to stock destruction in Tooele, Utah. My delegation believes that this endeavour will provide an excellent possibility for all negotiators to acquaint themselves with the problems of verification of the destruction of stocks in a practical manner. My delegation expects to contribute to the workshop in a substantive way. I wish to recall in this context that former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had announced at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that the Federal Government would also on its part organize a workshop on the destruction of chemical weapons. That event is now scheduled for 1984, and invitations will be extended to interested delegations in due time. The destruction facility