

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States of America)

We believe the binary programme increases the likelihood of a chemical weapons convention. Modernization of the United States deterrent diminishes the value of the Soviet chemical weapons arsenal by making its use less attractive, which, in turn, makes it more likely that the Soviet Union will be willing to give it up. This small United States retaliatory capability provides leverage at the negotiating table. Anyone who questions this should remember that it was only after the Congress funded the binary programme that the Soviet Union began to permit these negotiations to move forward.

Which brings us to another distortion by the Soviet Union: the assertion that the United States is impeding the chemical weapons negotiations, while the Soviet Union is doing all that it can to complete the convention. Negotiators who have participated in these talks over the years know better. Those who have not followed CW negotiations closely need only compare the United States draft convention (CD/500) with the "rolling text", and read our various papers, to see that it is the United States that has made significant contributions to the present text. On the other hand, a review of the Ad hoc Committee's annual reports reveals that the Soviet Union did not produce a single CD document directly contributing to treaty text during the almost four years that have passed since CD/500 was introduced. Indeed, the Soviet Union, individually, has produced only three CW documents at all. One, of course, is the recently submitted information on the Shikhany visit found in CD/789. This is a welcome confidence-building measure, to be sure, but it does not suggest a single word of "rolling text". The other two Soviet documents are the two propagandistic attacks on binaries. That is the extent of Soviet CW documents tabled since the United States presented CD/500 almost four years ago.

Paradoxically, the major contribution of the Soviet Union to the chemical weapons negotiations is that they recently quit saying no to some of the substantive proposals of others. This is a welcome development, and we encourage it. It is more productive than assaults on the integrity and intentions of other delegations.

Such simplistic and inflammatory arguments as we find in CD/790 will neither curtail United States chemical weapons modernization nor lead us closer to our goal of a chemical-weapon-free world. The crux of the matter is that there is no inconsistency in seeking the ultimate elimination of all chemical weapons while, in the interim, insisting upon the preservation of national security. That is what the United States is doing.

Our delegation acknowledges the pace of negotiations has slowed during the past few months. When the Soviet Union accepted the United States proposal for mandatory challenge inspection, many delegations perceived, for the first time, that a chemical weapons convention was indeed possible. In this light, States that formerly played a less active role in the negotiations are now enunciating national positions and expressing reservations and concerns. We do not have more unresolved issues, we are simply discovering what some of the divergencies are. The natural consequence is more discord and less agreed text. But this is a phase of the negotiations that has always been inevitable, and the fact that we have reached that point when we are candidly debating the hard issues is, to our delegation, a sign of progress.