

(Mr. Jaroszek, Poland)

organizational changes introduced by the present Chairman of the Committee. We are also encouraged by the active participation in negotiations of 22 non-member States.

As the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tadeusz Olechowski, declared before the forty-third session of the General Assembly, my country is ready to join such a convention as soon as it is open for signature. In the meantime we are making all the necessary modifications of our internal law. At the beginning of January 1989, for instance, new strict controls on the export of dual-purpose chemical agents were introduced.

The successful completion of a chemical weapons convention would have a great positive impact on the entire situation in international affairs. It would liquidate a whole category of operational weapons of mass destruction. It would transform the concept of challenge inspections, without the right of refusal, into a multilaterally agreed principle. And last, but not least, it would open up new vistas for multilateral disarmament.

Chemical weapons undoubtedly represent a top-priority issue in the work of the Conference. We must remember, however, that the Conference also deals with other problems of great importance which are equally ripe for a negotiated solution. The question of nuclear disarmament comes first, because a nuclear war would pose a threat of the total physical annihilation of mankind.