

(Mr. Luce, United Kingdom)

Today I have pleasure in introducing a further British paper, CD/575, relating to the verification of non-production. It makes specific proposals for a system of routine inspection of industrial plants making or handling substances identified as posing a high risk to the Convention. The paper also contains specific proposals for an international exchange of data on the production and transfer of a wider range of substances, some of which have actually been used as chemical warfare agents. This paper builds on the earlier British papers to which I have referred and on the relevant section of the United States draft Convention. I believe that it now offers a firm basis for a system of verification of non-production of chemical weapons which would complement the system of challenge inspection. Moreover, by creating a situation which should give rise to the minimum of suspicions that a party was misusing its civil chemical facilities for the manufacture of chemical weapons, I believe that it would ease the burden on the system of challenge inspection.

As I said earlier, challenges should be very few and far between. The fewer and the further apart, the better for the Convention. And the more robust the routine inspection régime, the less need to invoke the challenge procedures. In that sense, the details of these latter procedures need to be fitted into the broader picture of the routine arrangements. In the jigsaw of the Convention, the pieces for challenge may be the hardest to place. Let us therefore ease our task by building up the rest of the puzzle with agreement on the routine elements.

I would emphasize that it is not my Government's intention to hinder the manufacture or use of chemicals for civil, peaceful purposes. Our sole aim is to provide confidence that no party could exploit its civil chemical industry for the clandestine production of chemical weapons. Our paper draws where appropriate on the experience of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which performs a similar function in the nuclear field. Of course, there are many important differences, which we have endeavoured to take into account. The ideas contained in our paper have been discussed with representatives of the chemical industry in the United Kingdom, who recognize the need for routine inspection. They have co-operated with the British Government in considering how to ensure adequate verification without compromising commercially confidential information or hampering industrial activity. We believe that our proposals take due account of these problems. We hope that they will be of benefit to other delegations both for discussions in this Conference and for consultations with their own national chemical industries.

This paper also touches on the role of the organization responsible for implementing the Convention. This organization should play a significant role in creating a new type of verifiable arms control agreement. It could also help to promote a positive climate for greater international co-operation between States Parties in the expansion and development of a safe chemical industry throughout the world. My delegation would be pleased to join others in studying this aspect further.

We will welcome other delegations' comments on our ideas. We do not claim to have in this paper the final answer. Nor are we interested in quick-fix solutions. In 1985 let us test to the full our capacity to address and resolve the hardest issues of verification. We should seek to continue this work in either New York or Geneva after the formal end of the Conference's Session. I urge the Conference to decide to do this. Mr. President, I make no apologies for dwelling on chemical weapons at such length. I believe that this is a goal within our reach in this Conference. The dangers are great. Together we should make every effort to achieve a ban now.