

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

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To turn now specifically to subjects under consideration in this Conference, I should like to start with that of chemical weapons on which the most progress has been made. We welcome the skill and vigour with which Ambassador Ekéus is pursuing his task as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. As he knows, he has the full support of my delegation and my own personal support in his work as Chairman. The same applies to the three Co-ordinators, Mr. Niewenhuys, Mr. Macedo and Dr. Krutzsch, in their

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systematic work. We appreciate the practical contribution that has been made in this field by the workshops held during this session in Finland and in the German Democratic Republic.

The United Kingdom has tabled as a contribution to the negotiations a series of papers on different aspects of the convention, several on the verification of non-production, one on the constitution of the organization that will need to be set up under the convention, and most recently on challenge inspection. The proposals tabled last July by the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr. Renton, for Article IX of the Treaty, remain firmly on the table. Mr. Gorbachev confirmed to Mrs. Thatcher during her visit to Moscow that the Soviet Union accepted broadly the British approach. We welcome the greater readiness the Soviet Union has shown in this area as in some others to consider effective verification. It is an important step down the road to building the confidence between States that must be fundamental for our convention.

Our work on verification has thrown into relief that further practical work remains to be done in other areas of the draft convention. In particular, we must resolve how to provide for effective administration of the convention. It is becoming clear that the organization to be set up under Article VIII will need to be effective from the moment the convention comes into force. It will need to provide inspectors immediately to conduct initial inspection and evaluation of declarations and to provide effective international monitoring of destruction of stocks and production facilities. Verification of certain sectors of the civil chemical industry under Article VI of the convention will also be required at an early stage. A trained corps of inspectors will be needed to conduct challenge inspection under Article IX. In addition the organization will have an important task of receiving and collating data reported by States Parties. It will be essential to have an effective organization in which all parties will have confidence. To achieve this aim we must consider now how it is to be recruited, trained, equipped and paid for.

Further work is needed on the régimes for the different schedules of substances under Article VI and their relation to the organization. A mechanism for revising schedules will also be essential.

Nor must we lose sight that if our convention is to be effective, it must be global. As the distinguished representative of the United States asked recently, we wonder why more countries have not stated whether or not they possess chemical weapons? My delegation has made its position clear on many occasions but we willingly do so again. The United Kingdom unilaterally abandoned its chemical warfare capability in the 1950s. We believe, as Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Gorbachev agreed in Moscow, that the conclusion of an effective chemical weapons convention is one of the top priorities.