

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr. P. Mladenov, stated on 14 April at the Conference, my country's chemical industry does not produce any of the key precursors for chemical weapons included in schedule [2]. For this reason we will probably not have installations subject to routine international verification. Nevertheless, we are interested in the experiment's results. We hope that the information to be presented after the experiment will help in working out the provisions for ad hoc checks in which the protagonist will be the technical secretariat. In the future an international experiment on this type of verification may also be carried out.

We are encouraged by the progress in the elaboration of the provisions on challenge inspection, namely the procedure for appointing international inspectors and the activities of the Executive Council after receiving the verification report. We think that the implementation of this type of verification must aim at promoting better compliance with the convention. At all events, it should not create conditions for a confrontation that may lead to adverse consequences.

To a certain degree the question of the order of destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles and production facilities remains an untied knot in the negotiations. All countries are interested in guarantees for their national security. That is why every country ought to be fully confident that the convention will not permit a situation where the security of any country or group of countries might be diminished.

If it is agreed that there is a need to level out chemical weapon stockpiles towards the end of the eighth year after the convention's entry into force, then it would be absolutely logical also that the process of destruction should proceed in compliance with an approved schedule under strict international control.

My delegation shares the view expressed by Ambassador Marchand of Canada that in developing the agreed régime for the phased destruction of chemical weapons "one of the primary concerns is to ensure that this process does not cause any diminution of ... national security ... during the very sensitive 10-year destruction phase". Hence it is not possible to regard as constructive proposals which, to quote my Canadian colleague again, "have the net effect of permitting the production and proliferation of chemical weapons during this crucial phase".

We are pleased that, in an attempt to finalize work on article V, it has been agreed that the joint Soviet-United States proposal on chemical weapon production facilities should be included in the "rolling text" of the convention.

We are concerned about the lack of tangible progress in working out article X. In our view the rendering of assistance to a member State in the event of a chemical weapons threat or the use of chemical weapons against it should be derived from the principle of undiminished security. Besides, it is necessary to think about the universality of the convention. It is logical to expect that the convention will be more attractive, both in political and legal terms, if it contains provisions for rendering assistance to every State party in the event of a chemical weapon threat or the use of such weapons against it.