

(The President)

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador von Wagner.

Mr. VON WAGNER (Germany): Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, the situation for those delegations which have in the past observed our deliberations and have had the opportunity to participate in, at least the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, is of course particularly unsatisfactory. In previous years, Mr. President, all ad hoc committees set up by the Conference needed a certain time to get started. Last year, if my recollection is correct, it took about three to four weeks until the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons got started. This year we are happy to record that the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons got started right away. There is the question of the admittance of observers, which is not delayed but takes more time and I accept that of course fully.

Nevertheless, the situation for the observers is, as I have said, very unsatisfactory. I have not very thoroughly consulted with the Secretariat so far whether there are ways and means of helping; I do not see any, I must confess. Nevertheless, I could promise those who are not yet observers but are participating in this public meeting today to see whether there are any ways and means, but my hope is not very great. I would wish to let them know that at least the Ad Hoc Committee Chairman deplores this delay, for which he is not responsible.