

Mr. MOREL (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, in introducing the French document on the maintenance of a security balance among all the parties to the convention during the 10-year period of the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons, which will be distributed to members of the Conference under the number CD/757, I wish to emphasize the paramount concern underlying this paper, that is the search for security within the framework of the convention. I will elaborate on the various practical applications before I come to the indispensable complement, that is verification. I now turn to the first part, the security imperative and its consequences.

Having already set out our general concerns at the end of the spring half of the session, on 28 April, suffice it this time for me to recall that in our view the convention, in order to be credible, must guarantee all parties to the convention security from the very moment of its entry into force, and not only a future security once all chemical weapons have been eliminated. The 10-year period must not be a period of diminished security. It is the first phase of the application of the convention, the development of which, in conditions of security acceptable to all, is indispensable in order to reach the second and final phase of the convention.

The order of destruction of stockpiles, as has already been pointed out by many States, is in this regard of decisive importance. But this is not simply a technical problem. The matter is eminently political since it is a question of establishing, for the whole of the 10-year period of stock destruction, a security balance based on security stocks which are limited, homogeneous and verifiable. Let us look more closely at these two concepts.

First of all, security balance. The future convention must be based on strict equality between all parties. No signatory country can claim special treatment at one moment or another. This is indeed the final goal, since the aim is a final ban on possession and production by all the States parties to the convention. But this equality must also be the rule during the 10-year period. Otherwise, in the initial stages, the convention will follow in the steps of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a treaty for the disarmament of disarmed countries, organizing maintained armaments for some and disarmament for others.

The provisions of the convention will play a decisive role in this respect. One must start from two observations which very seriously complicate the smooth course of the 10-year period.

First observation: stockpiles will be declared only 30 days after the entry into force of the convention. The precise state of affairs as regards chemical warfare will not therefore be technically known or politically recognized until after the accession of most States.