

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

The prohibition of chemical weapons is an area which is widely considered to be more promising. As a result of the three extra weeks of consultations and deliberations in the Ad Hoc Committee held in January, positions were further clarified and common ground as well as divergencies identified on some of the issues involved. This will be helpful for the future negotiations. Here, I wish to express once again my appreciation for the efforts made by the former Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, and the co-ordinators.

It is still an arduous task to negotiate a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. However, we are convinced that if all sides proceed from a constructive and co-operative spirit, greater progress could be achieved during the current session. It was proposed at the last session that the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons be re-established before the end of the second week of this session. We are pleased to note that it was actually re-established in the first week of the session with Ambassador Turbanski of Poland as its Chairman. We have in a way accomplished our task ahead of schedule. I hope this augurs well for our work. The current year is the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the 1925 Geneva Protocol — a historic document which has played a significant role over the years in the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. **Regrettably**, however, mankind is to this day still not yet completely safe from the threat of chemical warfare. In commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of this important international legal instrument, let us redouble our efforts in the negotiations and come to substantial results so as to rid mankind of the danger of this abominable weapon as early as possible.

(Mr. Alfarargi, Egypt)

The fact that we have reiterated the importance we attribute to the above mentioned agenda items, should not be interpreted as disregard for the importance of other agenda items. On the contrary, we eagerly look forward to the rapid achievement of a draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. This is an objective that has been repeatedly reiterated by previous speakers. We sincerely hope that the Ad Hoc Committee will succeed in finding a way for conciliating controversial views and compromise solutions for the remaining problems in order to build upon the progress that has been achieved until now.