

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): Mr. President, first of all I would wish to express my great appreciation for the fact that I have the possibility of addressing the CD under your chairmanship.

I shall devote my statement today to the issue of chemical weapons, although Finland attaches great importance to all items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. A complete ban on chemical weapons has clearly become one of the foremost priorities of international disarmament efforts. It is an issue of today, not of any undefined later day in the future. The negotiations for a comprehensive chemical weapons convention within the Conference on Disarmament are where our efforts should be concentrated. The global approach is the only one that can have durable results. At the same time Finland is ready to participate in complementary international efforts as long as they truly uphold the main objective and do not lead to any diversions from it. It was in this spirit that we participated in the Paris Conference last January. It is in this spirit that we support the United Nations Secretary-General's role in investigating reports of possible use of chemical weapons and the work of the qualified experts' group in developing this procedure. It will be in this spirit that we shall go to Canberra next September.

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