

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To complete this system, we must consider the problem posed by the "commercial super-toxics", in other words, the highly toxic substances that are used in civilian industry, for instance, in the pharmaceutical branch and in the production of pesticides. It would appear necessary to set up for them a special category, one distinct from the three already established, in order to deal with them adequately. However, the differences of opinion that exist concerning the compounds that could be considered and the type of measures that would be applied to them have precluded our finding a solution to this issue -- which, as all parties to the negotiations recognize, is both necessary and urgent.

We all know that the present schedules cannot be exhaustive or definitive. Their first review will take place when States possessing chemical weapons declare the composition of their arsenals to the international authority. Maybe these will include chemicals which have not been considered in the course of negotiations; consideration will then have to be given to the incorporation of those substances in the schedules. Later on, if we want the convention to keep its full force, periodic updating of the schedules in the light of the progress of science and technology will be inevitable. That is why the importance has been recognized of a flexible, expeditious and reliable mechanism for this purpose. It will thus be possible to include a new chemical in the schedules, to withdraw it from them or to shift it from one schedule to another. We have worked to this end during this session and progress has been satisfactory.

My delegation considers that appropriate verification machinery is essential if an international disarmament agreement is to function effectively for all its parties. The convention on chemical weapons, of course, does not elude this general rule. Ambitious in its objectives, the draft which is now being drawn up also establishes a very broad system of verification designed to guarantee full compliance with all its provisions.

An independent international body created by the convention itself would be responsible for these very delicate tasks. This seems to us an optimum solution for ensuring the credibility of the instrument. As you will all recall, that was the course chosen by the Latin American States when, over 20 years ago, they negotiated the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the functioning of the body that was set up has been entirely satisfactory.

The problems posed by the verification of the numerous obligations the convention will impose are obviously considerable. To guarantee, on the one hand, that chemical weapons will not be produced in future and that prohibited activities will not be carried out, while taking into account, on the other hand, the protection of trade secrets and the need not to interfere excessively in national civilian activities makes the design of appropriate verification machinery even more difficult. We are all aware of the great difficulties this involves and we must strive to resolve them. Some sacrifices will be inevitable for the sake of the greater interest.