My Government attaches the greatest importance to the questions of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; it weighs the risks attaching to the existence of such weapons; it understands the legitimate concern felt in that respect within the international community. My delegation therefore welcomes the initiation of an examination of these questions by the Committee at informal meetings. We had already recommended discussions of this kind in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

Statement by the British Representative (Summerhayes) to the Committee on Disarmament: Chemical Weapons, April 3, 1981

Turning now to chemical weapons, I should like first of all to stress our gratitude to the distinguished representative of Sweden for the energy, resourcefulness and commitment he has shown in his chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons. My Government considers that the elimination of chemical weapons from the arsenals of all States is of the greatest importance. We are determined to do all we can to assist in that process. We shall be giving further serious thought to the discussion that has been taking place in that Group. My comments now are intended to show the direction of our thinking.

In tackling the question of chemical weapons, we are dealing not with some potential future weapon, but with armaments which exist in the world and which have been used in the past to terrible effect. The United Kingdom has always taken the view that in any disarmament treaty there must be appropriate and adequate measures of verification. Where the arms concerned are actually in existence, that view is reinforced; it takes on increased importance. The United Kingdom Government believe that a CW convention must be adequately verifiable. Without adequate verification States will not have confidence that such a convention would be observed. Indeed, it is mainly because we have been unable so far to agree on provisions for verification in which all States would have confidence, that better progress has not been made. Verification is and will remain the keystone of progress.

I should like, therefore, to take a few minutes to examine further what my delegation means when we talk of adequate verification. Obviously we cannot realistically hope for agreement on a verification system that would provide a 100 per cent certainty of compliance. Desirable as it would be to devise such a system, we recognize that this would not be possible—and this fact was admirably demonstrated in document

1 CD/PV.121, pp. 13–16.
CD/CW/WP.9, submitted by Canada in the CW Working Group. But
we must have provisions which will give all parties to a convention a
good degree of confidence that all other States party are observing it. Moreover,
if we incorporate such provisions, these will in themselves provide an
incentive to all States to comply fully with the letter as well as the spirit of
the agreement.

The question then is what activities will need to be verified if States are
to [have] such confidence in the convention, and what form should this verifica-
tion take? The United Kingdom considers that verification measures
would be necessary for each stage of implementation of all the provisions
of the convention relating to the declaration and destruction of stockpiles
and of production facilities, and thereafter for monitoring the compliance
of States with the provisions banning development and production, in-
cluding monitoring the use for permitted peaceful purposes of chemical
warfare agents and dual purpose chemical agents. The United Kingdom
Government also considers it essential that the convention should have
an effective complaints procedure.

I am sure that the United Kingdom position on these issues is well
known. But I should like to take a little time to elaborate on one or two of
the fundamental aspects of that position. One of the main elements of an
adequate verification regime would be the establishment of a
consultative committee. The committee would, in our view, be most efficient
if it were limited in numbers, its composition being drawn from the
States parties to the convention. Such a committee would have the central
role in the verification regime. Experts from the States parties would be in
a position to play a constructive part in ensuring that the convention was
being observed. The concept of a multilateral consultative committee also
implies a willingness on the part of States parties to share expertise and in-
formation, to be open on issues relating to this crucial subject. A high
degree of openness, of frank exchange of information between States, will
provide a basis of confidence. Indeed, I would go further and say that it is
essential to the creation of the climate of confidence which would be
necessary for a CW convention to be successfully implemented.

My country has already put forward ideas on what some of the func-
tions of the consultative committee might be. We believe that it should
analyse and evaluate reports and information provided by States parties;
it should have the power to call for supplementary information as
necessary and to conduct inquiries. It would carry out required measures
of verification and also conduct on-site and other inspections as provided
for in the convention. It would inform all States parties of its findings and
it would consult and co-operate with national authorities charged with
domestic activities in connection with the fulfilment of the provisions of
the convention.

The consultative committee should not merely be a bureaucratic or ad-
ministrative body, but would also provide a forum for consultation and
co-operation between States parties. Through their participation States par-
ties would have confidence in the committee itself; its international mem-
bership would mean that it would not represent one particular State or group
nada in the CW Working Group. But I will give all parties to a convention a good States party are observing it. Moreover, these will in themselves provide an injury with the letter as well as the spirit of the measures will need to be verified if States are considering that verification measures of implementation of all the provisions declaration and destruction of stockpiles are for monitoring the compliance with development and production, permitted peaceful purposes of chemical agents. The United Kingdom is that the convention should have an official position on these issues is well aware of the need to elaborate on one or two of them. One of the main elements of an important in our view is the establishment of a committee would, in our view, be most efficient its composition being drawn from the countries a committee would have the central parts from the States parties would be important in ensuring that the convention was multilateral consultative committee also States parties to share expertise and in developing this crucial subject. A high degree of information between States will mean, I would go further and say that it is mate of confidence which would be implemented.

In our view, these declarations would need to be of a detailed and precise nature. They would need first to say whether a State possessed CW agents, precursors and munitions, and then to give details of the types of agents held and the quantity of each type. In addition, the location and types of all production facilities for CW would need to be listed. States would also need to make declarations either at the same time or soon after about the types and quantities of agents to be retained for permitted activities, and the production facilities to be maintained for that purpose. Until all CW stocks and facilities had been destroyed, further periodic declarations would need to be made; in the case of CW agents retained for peaceful purposes, declarations would probably need to be made annually. Such declarations would all be processed by the consultative committee, and would form the basis for their further work in verifying the convention.

The States parties would have various duties in respect of the consultative committee. In participating in the committee, States would be recognizing the value of co-operation. That co-operation would have to extend further than the straightforward exchange of data. There would also need to be provision for a degree of on-site inspection to ensure that the terms of the convention had been and were being complied with, that the declarations made were accurate and that stockpiles had been
destroyed and production facilities dismantled. A few countries have considered it regrettable that such measures should be thought necessary. We believe they are needed—but that they also offer a positive benefit in offering a way for States to remove any lingering doubts and to build confidence. The aim of the verification regime for a CW convention should, we believe, be to ensure that such doubts do not arise, or that if they do arise, they can be promptly allayed. Obviously we cannot hope to police the chemical industries of the world—the resources required, and the expense, would be immense. But it is right that every consideration should be given to opening to impartial and conscientious inspection those specific areas of activity which could give rise to concern or doubt. If there is nothing to hide, what objection can there be to this?

It has been suggested that inspection would be unacceptable because it would involve a breach of commercial confidence. But I believe members of this Committee will agree that where such potentially fearful weapons are involved, where so much is at stake, we cannot allow ourselves to be deflected by this problem. We can accept that maintaining commercial confidence is important—but I am sure that ways can be found of ensuring that commercial confidentiality is maintained, while all the steps necessary are taken to enhance the even more vital issue of confidence in a CW convention. The experience of the Federal Republic of Germany in the field of inspections of commercial production facilities will be valuable when detailed consideration is given to this subject. The United Kingdom will be further developing its ideas on this aspect at a later stage.

I should like to turn now to a relatively new concept which has been under serious discussion for the first time this year in the CW Working Group, namely, the Swedish proposal to extend the scope of the treaty to cover areas of offensive CW capability such as planning, organization and training. The ideas of the Swedish delegation are set out in some detail in document CD/142. This is an interesting and far-reaching proposal, although one which also presents a number of difficulties. My authorities are still giving it detailed consideration, but I should like today to offer some preliminary comments.

The banning of what I might describe as the doctrinal, as opposed to the material, elements of an offensive CW capability is not in our view central or fundamental to a CW convention. It is more in the nature of a measure for building confidence—in this case confidence that a State party will not suddenly abrogate the Convention at some future date. As a first stage, as I understand it, States would make declarations of any aspects of a CW capability they might have. As a second stage, observers would be invited to attend military manoeuvres in general, and those involving NBC training in particular. In the latter case, observers would be permitted to monitor electronic communications. In the third stage, States would instruct their armed forces that no further activities specifically connected with the possession of a capability to conduct offensive CW operations were to take place. Finally, there could be provisions for the exchange of
A few countries have concerns which measures should be thought necessary. That they also offer a positive benefit in allaying any lingering doubts and to build confidence in a regime for a CW convention should, as far as possible, dispel doubts do not arise, or that if they do arise. Obviously we cannot hope to police the world—the resources required, and the expertise that every consideration should be neutral and conscientious inspection those will give rise to concern or doubt. If there can be to this conclusion would be unacceptable because it would not be practical. But I believe members where such potential fearful weapons are, we cannot allow ourselves to be in that position. Maintaining commercial confidence is within our reach. Many ways can be found of ensuring compliance, while all the steps necessary to achieve this confidence in a CW convention for the nuclear Republic of Germany in the field of facilities will be valuable when this Committee is up on this subject. The United Kingdom will be an important aspect at a later stage.

This is a new concept which has been discussed this year in the CW Working Group in view to extend the scope of the treaty to include confidence building measures such as inspection, organization and protection. The delegation are set out in some detail in the Committee's report in these, for example, far-reaching proposal, the number of difficulties. My authorities are, but I should like to offer some thoughts at the end of the会上 talk debate as the doctrinal, as opposed to the UK government. It is more in the nature of a measure about the confidence that a State party will not adopt at some future date. As a first stage, as is the case with declarations of any aspects of a CW convention, observers would be invited to join. In the second stage, those involving NBC training and research, observers would be permitted to visit. In the third stage, States would in fact conduct activities specifically connected with the exchange of information and, most importantly, for on-site inspection of military installations, munitions stockpiles and airfields. That is how we have understood the proposals in CD/142, as elaborated in CD/CW/WP.7.

This is a complex and detailed proposal. The United Kingdom has in the past advocated the use of a confidence-building regime to help States to prepare for a CW convention, and to reassure States about compliance once such a convention has come into being. But the ideas contained in the Swedish paper are of a rather different nature from these earlier proposals, and need careful thought. The United Kingdom is in favour of some kind of confidence-building regime in connection with a ban on chemical weapons—indeed, we have supported certain earlier proposals in this field. But we need to give this question careful thought. In the first place, I wonder whether the proposals are not too complex for inclusion in a convention the primary and vital function of which would be to prohibit the possession of chemical weapons. The negotiation of a convention limited at this purpose will be much less complicated, as we have seen from the long discussions in this Committee and from the efforts of the two States members of this Committee which have been involved in bilateral negotiations. We should ask ourselves whether measures over and above those essential to the main function of the convention might not be better treated separately. In this way it might be possible to avoid the penalty of further delays in progress in negotiating a ban on chemical weapons.

Secondly, I think we must ask ourselves what measures proposed by the Swedish delegation would achieve. Would they in fact build confidence in the treaty regime? We can see that, if all States parties to a convention were sure that all other States parties had entirely ceased all planning, training or organizing in relation to offensive CW operations, confidence would be increased. But, despite the high degree of openness required by the measures proposed in CD/142, we really doubt whether it would ever be possible to be certain that all doctrinal activities related to offensive CW had ceased.

Thirdly, in view of a number of statements already made in the CW Working Group, we think that there must also be some doubt whether the measures proposed would ever be acceptable to a number of States whose accession to a CW convention would be absolutely essential. We would urge that in pursing negotiations for a CW convention, we would do well to limit ourselves to the basic issue of prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of these weapons.

Finally, I should like to say that the United Kingdom welcomes the work that has been done in the Ad Hoc Working Group during this session. In particular, we have found the Chairman's set of working papers particularly useful in structuring the discussion of this important subject. We feel, however, that the Working Group has not had sufficient opportunity to discuss these papers as fully as is needed, let alone arrive at firm conclusions. We shall be able to take advantage of the forthcoming recess to give further consideration to a number of important points and will hope to be able to make further detailed contributions in the next part of the session.