

established an *ad hoc* working group to elaborate; States and the USSR now make a report to the Committee on the areas in which agreement has been reached and the outstanding areas in which agreement has eluded us; a contact group to "define further the methods and forms of the work."

Members of this Committee are experienced negotiators and recognize that there are times when a thorough exchange of views can provide an opportunity for reaching the way to agreement. However, we also recognize that there are moments when a public elaboration of such views can make the task of diplomacy more difficult, by diverting attention from concentrating efforts on defence of national interests and the determination of which of these two stages of the process is a question of judgement, not of right or

judgements, we are aware of the special responsibilities upon the United States and the USSR. After the meeting, we have arrived at the view that the proposal for a working group which would elaborate a draft convention and request fully to inform such a group of the progress of the request had been reached and of the issues which would hinder rather than assist the bilateral negotiations. We recognize that others, whose sincerity we do not in any way doubt, have a different opinion. In such a situation, we must rely on our own judgements, with a heightened sense of responsibility for the positions we take. Nonetheless, we have listened to the expositions made by our colleagues. While we do not share the status of the bilateral negotiations might not be the same, we will now undertake to present such a report at the end of the second part of our annual session. Whatever action the Committee may take at this time, we will carefully review the proposals introduced by the United States with a view to identifying those areas in which multilateral activity to reach our objective of a ban on chemical weapons might begin without, at the same time, rendering the negotiations even more difficult.

We have no desire to mislead the Committee or to create the impression that we have an acceptable approach to the problem in hand. We have listened, and we will continue to respond to what we have heard. The theme in our discussions of the last two days was the need for extensive informal consultations. Another theme was the need for a decision we should take at this time, we could not

really begin to implement such a decision until this summer. In this context, the delegation of the United States wonders if our common purpose would best be served by creating a group to "define further the methods and forms of the Committee's work." I thought we were in the process of doing precisely that, and somehow, I doubt that placing a new chapeau on our efforts will lead to a substantively different outcome. I certainly would not wish my remarks to be interpreted as an unwillingness to engage in consultations, since the delegation of the United States has never insisted on a formal structure to consult with colleagues and we do not so insist at this time. Given the differing perceptions as to the area of substantive accord and difference between the proposal of the Group of 21 and that of my distinguished colleague from Poland, I think that a further exposition of the import of each proposal would be advisable so we all share a common understanding and frame of reference when we return to this subject during the second half of our 1979 session.

Statement by the Soviet Representative (Issraelyan) to the Committee on Disarmament: Chemical Weapons, April 26, 1979¹

The Soviet delegation takes a highly positive view of the fact that the Committee on Disarmament has decided to devote part of its spring session to the consideration of the question of prohibition of chemical weapons. This is a token of the great importance which the States members of the Committee attach to that question. And indeed, in terms of urgency it has come to occupy one of the foremost places among the principal problems of disarmament.

In the past few years the Committee on Disarmament has had before it more than a few concrete and interesting proposals concerning the prohibition of chemical weapons. All of them provide a good deal of material for further work. But, at the same time, they demonstrate the complexity of the problem of prohibiting chemical weapons because they reflect essential differences in the approaches of different States to certain questions.

At the present session of the Committee, too, the latest working documents on chemical weapons were submitted for our attention. The Soviet delegation fully understands the interest shown in this matter by many States members of the Committee, their concern, their desire to achieve constructive results as soon as possible. Indeed, one of the particular features of the problem we are considering this week is its universality. It touches upon the interests of the widest range of countries, inasmuch as there is a chemical industry practically everywhere and, at the same time, the possibility of creating and developing a chemical military potential.

¹ CD/PV.31, pp. 22-24.

Quite naturally the question arises as to the most expedient manner of organizing the Committee's work on the prohibition of chemical weapons. That is, in substance, as we understand, the principal object of the proposals most recently submitted to the Committee. I have in mind the working papers by Italy, the Netherlands and the Group of 21² and also the ideas expressed in statements by the representatives of India, Canada, Japan and a number of other countries. As I have already said, we view the motives for the above-mentioned proposals with great sympathy.

At the same time, a number of questions arise in connexion with these proposals. These questions should be taken duly into account with a view to finding the most efficient forms of work which will facilitate progress in this important matter.

For example, it would hardly be proper if we failed to give attention to the circumstance that two members of the Committee—the Soviet Union and the United States of America—have for a number of years past been conducting detailed bilateral negotiations on the question of prohibition of chemical weapons, at which, albeit slowly, some progress is being achieved.

In the course of these bilateral negotiations, which we regard as an important step towards the conclusion of an international convention, we are endeavouring to take full account of the international community's legitimate concern to obtain prohibition of chemical weapons as early as possible. But we cannot simply share the optimism of those who consider that some kind of "parallel" conduct of negotiations in the Committee will be a simple and easy matter and will in itself have a beneficial effect upon the solution of the problem as a whole.

Thus, we have serious doubts concerning the proposal to establish an *ad hoc* working group for the elaboration of a draft convention. It seems to us that conditions for this are not yet ripe. As for the proposal that the participants in the bilateral negotiations should fully inform the Committee on matters in which agreement has been reached as well as issues still outstanding, it seems to us that putting this proposal into effect may harm the bilateral negotiations rather than facilitate them. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility of presenting to the Committee an agreed report on the progress of the bilateral negotiations at an appropriate time, e.g., in the course of the second part of the current session of the Committee.

It would also be wrong to ignore the general state of the matter and, in particular, the fact that the positions of different States diverge seriously on many aspects.

In such circumstances it is necessary to work out a balanced approach towards organizing the further consideration of the problem of chemical weapons in the Committee and, in particular, to reflect on

² Italy and the Netherlands submitted their respective working papers on Feb. 6; the Group of 21 (the "non-aligned" CD members) submitted its paper on Apr. 9. The Italian and the Group of 21 papers are printed above.

question arises as to the most expedient manner for the Committee's work on the prohibition of chemical weapons. In substance, as we understand, the principal ideas most recently submitted to the Committee are contained in working papers by Italy, the Netherlands and the United States. The ideas expressed in statements by the representatives of Canada, Japan and a number of other countries, and in the views we view the motives for the above-mentioned proposals with sympathy.

A number of questions arise in connexion with the work of the Committee. These questions should be taken duly into account in determining the most efficient forms of work which will be most effective in this important matter.

It would hardly be proper if we failed to give attention to the fact that two members of the Committee—the United States of America—have for a number of years been conducting detailed bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, at which, albeit slowly, progress has been achieved.

These bilateral negotiations, which we regard as an important part of the conclusion of an international convention, should take full account of the international community's concern to obtain prohibition of chemical weapons. But we cannot simply share the optimism of those who believe that some kind of "parallel" conduct of negotiations by the Committee will be a simple and easy matter and will in itself have a beneficial effect upon the solution of the problem as a whole.

Various doubts concerning the proposal to establish a working group for the elaboration of a draft convention. The conditions for this are not yet ripe. As for the participants in the bilateral negotiations should fully take account of matters in which agreement has been reached. On issues still outstanding, it seems to us that putting emphasis on matters in which agreement has been reached may harm the bilateral negotiations rather than help them. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility of presenting to the Committee an agreed report on the progress of the negotiations at an appropriate time, e.g., in the course of the current session of the Committee. It would be wrong to ignore the general state of the matter and the fact that the positions of different States vary on many aspects.

In such circumstances it is necessary to work out a balanced approach to organizing the further consideration of the problem in the Committee and, in particular, to reflect on

the Netherlands submitted their respective working papers on Feb. 6, the United States (aligned" CD members) submitted its paper on Apr. 9. The Italian working papers are printed above.

other possible approaches. In this connexion, the views of our Polish colleagues concerning an unofficial contact group seem to us to be of great interest. The most efficacious and generally acceptable approaches could be defined with its help.

We understand, of course, that some other delegations have a different opinion, which we by no means intend to ignore. On the contrary, we propose to study with full attention the proposals put forward in the course of the Committee's current session. This also applies, in particular, to the question connected with defining the problems which could be considered at the multilateral level without detriment to the progress of the bilateral negotiations.

Naturally, our position on these questions will be determined in the light of various circumstances in the future. We shall, as in the past, seek the most efficient and efficacious methods of work of the Committee which might ensure the solving of one of the urgent problems of disarmament—the prohibition of chemical weapons.

News Conference Remarks by President Carter: Compliance With SALT II Treaty if Rejected by the Senate [Extract], April 30, 1979¹

Q. Mr. President, you've been quoted by historian James MacGregor Burns as saying that even if the SALT treaty is rejected by the Senate, that you would abide by its terms. I would like to know how far you would go in this. Would you, for instance, abide by the limitations on the range of land- and sea-based cruise missiles, and more generally, don't you think abiding by a treaty that's been rejected by the Senate would amount to thwarting the will of the public?

The President. I have no inclination to minimize the importance of the constitutional processes whereby treaties are negotiated by the Executive and ratified or rejected by the Senate.

My belief is that the treaty will be sound enough when it's completely scrutinized by the public and the Senate, that it will be ratified. If, because of some factor that I cannot anticipate, the treaty is not ratified, then I would do all I could, monitoring very closely Soviet activities, to comply with the basic agreements reached.

It would certainly not be proper for me, if the treaty were not ratified, to immediately launch our country into a massive nuclear arms race. And the constraints placed on me and the Soviet Union, monitored very carefully by each other, would be a basis on which to constrain ourselves and to avoid such a nuclear confrontation in the absence of a treaty. But I still believe that we will have the treaty.

¹ Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, May 7, 1979, pp. 749-751.