We shall continue to listen with interest to any observations and any comments likely to bring us closer to the goal which has been proclaimed in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly that we unanimously welcomed.

Working Paper Submitted by the Group of 21 to the Committee on Disarmament: Negotiations on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, April 9, 1979*1

The use of chemical and biological weapons is prohibited in the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Negotiations in the CCD resulted, 1972, in a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (chemical) and toxin weapons and on their destruction. The convention entered into force in 1975. Pursuant to article IX of the convention each State Party to it undertakes to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and for their destruction, and on appropriate measures concerning equipment and means of delivery specifically designed for the production or use of chemical agents for weapons purposes. Since 1972 three draft conventions on chemical weapons have been presented in the CCD by a group of socialist States, Japan, and the United Kingdom respectively. In 1974 the United States and the Soviet Union announced their intention to present to the CCD a joint initiative on the subject of chemical weapons. Since 1976 these two States have held bilateral talks for this purpose. In the CCD a substantial amount of work was accomplished with regard to the chemical weapons question. In that respect a group of non-aligned and neutral countries members of the CCD stated their position in a working paper (CCD/400).

A considerable amount of background material is available. Most of this material was synthesized in an informal paper entitled "Compilation of Material on Chemical Weapons from CCD Working Papers and Statements, 1972-1976", dated 11 March, 1977.

The United Nations General Assembly has in various resolutions repeatedly emphasized the importance of the chemical weapons issue.

The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament underlined that the complete and effective prohibition of the

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*CD 11: "Group of 21" refers to representatives of the so-called "non-aligned" states members of the CD.
*For text, see Documents on Disarmament, 1969, pp. 764-765.
development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction represent one of the most urgent measures of disarmament.7

The thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly adopted two resolutions with regard to the chemical weapons question.

In resolution 33/59A the Assembly requests the Committee on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to undertake, at the beginning of its 1979 session, negotiations with a view to elaborating an agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and for their destruction, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives.8

In the same resolution the Committee is requested to report on the results of its negotiations to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

In resolution 33/71 [H–IV] the Committee is requested to undertake on a priority basis, at its first session in January 1979, negotiations concerning a treaty or convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all types of chemical weapons and on their destruction.9

As regards the bilateral talks the Soviet Union and the United States are urged (resolution 33/59) to submit their joint initiative to the Committee in order to assist it in achieving early agreement on the subject. From the wording of both resolutions it is clear that negotiations in the Committee do not have to be preceded by the conclusion of the bilateral talks. In other words the negotiations in the Committee may proceed parallel with the bilateral talks. It is the firm belief of the Group of 21 that the negotiations in the Committee would not hamper or hinder the bilateral talks. Quite the contrary, the parallel negotiations would be of assistance to each other.

In view of the above and taking into account that multilateral negotiations have not yet started the Group of 21 is convinced of the urgent need to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group, open to the participation of all Member States of the Committee, with a view to elaborating a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction. States not members of the Committee would be entitled to submit to the Ad Hoc Working Group written proposals or working documents and to participate in the consideration of the subject matter of such proposals and working documents.

In discharging its responsibility the Ad Hoc Working Group would have as basic texts for its work the draft treaties, proposals and working papers on a convention on chemical weapons presented to the Committee and its predecessors as well as the draft treaties, propos-

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7 Ibid., 1978, p. 425.
8 Ibid., pp. 719–721.
9 Ibid., p. 754.
The Assembly requests the Committee on Disarmament to undertake, at the beginning of its negotiations with a view to elaborating an international convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and for taking into account all existing proposals and working papers submitted to it during the course of its work by both members and non-members of the Committee.

In order to enable the Ad Hoc Working Group to accomplish its task the Committee would request the States participating in the bilateral negotiations on chemical weapons fully to inform the Ad Hoc Working Group on the state of negotiations indicating areas in which agreement has been reached as well as issues which still are outstanding.

In the process of elaborating the draft convention the Ad Hoc Working Group would inter alia identify areas of agreement and possible new elements of importance for the formulation of the scope and verification of a chemical weapons convention.

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