

(Mr. Koicai, Kenya)

initiatives, with a view to the final elaboration of a convention at the earliest possible date, and to re-establish its Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons for this purpose with the mandate to be agreed upon by the Conference at the beginning of its 1989 session'. The Group of 21 would like to recall that both these resolutions were adopted by consensus exactly two months ago.

"The Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which took place in Paris from 7 to 11 January 1989, in its Final Declaration, adopted unanimously by all participating States, went still further in stressing the urgency and the priority of the task entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, when it stated: 'to this end, they call on the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date'.

"The Group of 21, taking into account all these facts, considers that the Conference on Disarmament should address the question of the mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons afresh. Never before has the international community, through all its different means of expression - Governments, parliaments, press - been so engaged in the issue of banning chemical weapons. Never before has political will been so clearly manifested from all quarters. This commitment, this expression of political will needs to be reflected in our work for 1989. The Group of 21 therefore believes that the mandate to be adopted by this forum should, first, include reference to the prohibition of use of chemical weapons, to be consistent with General Assembly resolutions 43/74 A and C and with the language enshrined in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference, and second, that the phrase 'except for its final drafting' should be deleted from the text of the mandate in order to convey to the international community our full acceptance of the responsibility entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee, as contained in the three texts referred to above, which the States represented here adhered to without exception."

Ambassador HOULLEZ (Belgium): I should first of all like to associate myself with the condolences expressed on the decease of Miss Levin.

As co-ordinator of the Western Group, and in taking the floor for the first time in the plenary of the Conference on Disarmament, I should like to express my satisfaction at seeing you, Mr. President, presiding over our meetings. Aware of your qualities as a diplomat, your patience and understanding, I feel reassured in addressing the Conference after such eminent and competent speakers as Ambassador García Robles, Ambassadors Theorin and Friedersdorf and the distinguished representative of Kenya in his capacity as spokesman of the Neutral and Non-aligned Group. We also hope today to hear Mr. Dumas, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, who was President of the recent Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical