

SPECIAL REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT
PREPARED IN VIEW OF THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION
DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT

Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons

I. Introduction

1. Taking into consideration paragraph 75 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament which, while noting that negotiations had been proceeding for several years stated that the conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons was one of the most urgent tasks of multilateral negotiations, the Committee on Disarmament has consistently included the item "chemical weapons" on its agenda since 1979. In 1979, before the establishment of the ad hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, the item was dealt with in plenary meetings. In considering this item on its agenda, the Committee has been taking into account the provisions of existing international instruments on the subject as well as all proposals and documents, including draft texts of chemical weapons conventions and joint United States-USSR reports on progress in the bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, presented within the framework of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) and the Committee on Disarmament (CD), the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

II. Mandate and substantive considerations of the Working Group in 1980 and 1981

2. In 1980, the Committee on Disarmament established an ad hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons by the following decision:

"In discharging its responsibility for the negotiation and elaboration as a matter of high priority, of a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction, the Committee on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of its 1980 session, an ad hoc working group of the Committee to define, through substantive examination, issues to be dealt with in the negotiation on such a convention, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives."

3. Under its 1980 mandate, the Working Group, having agreed to structure its work under the three general headings of "scope", "verification" and "other matters", undertook a substantive examination of the issues to be dealt with in the negotiations on a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. On the basis of this examination, the issues on which convergence of views among participating delegations emerged and those where no convergence of views existed were ascertained (document CD/131/Rev.1).