

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico): On behalf of the Group of 21, I should like to make the following statement on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

"The commitment of the international community to banning chemical weapons has been emphatically expressed on several occasions in the last year by Governments in unilateral statements as well as in the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, and at the Paris Conference, and by governments and industry together at the Canberra Conference. This commitment, and the repeated declarations of political will to this end, must be reflected in our work for 1990.

"It is essential that rapid progress be made on the political issues which are still outstanding, along with progress on technical issues. It is a serious concern of the Group of 21 that the substantive progress on primarily technical issues has not been accompanied by progress on some political issues of great importance to the Group, such as use of chemical weapons, assistance, sanctions and the Executive Council. A proper balance must also be established between rights and obligations for all the future parties to the Convention, in order to secure universal adherence to this important instrument of international law. This must be clearly reflected in the negotiations if they are to lead to a successful conclusion, thereby ridding the world of the threat of use of these awesome weapons of mass destruction.

"The conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which took place in Paris between 7 and 11 January 1989, in its Final Declaration, adopted unanimously by all participating States, stressed the urgency and the priority of the task entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and called 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'.

"At the Government-Industry Conference held in Canberra from 18 to 22 September last year, the urgency of concluding a convention totally banning chemical weapons was further underlined.

"On 15 December 1989, the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly unanimously adopted two resolutions which refer to the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Resolution 44/115 A, on 'Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons' expresses the regret of the General Assembly that 'a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction has not yet been concluded'. It 'again urges the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to intensify, during its 1990 session, which will be of pivotal importance, the negotiations on such a convention and to reinforce its efforts further