

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

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Working Paper concerning the Report of the Secretary-General of
1 July 1969 on Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons
and the Effects of Their Possible Use (A/7575)

I. The problem of the prohibition and total elimination of weapons of mass destruction is one of the urgent tasks facing the international community.

In the field of nuclear weapons certain steps have already been taken, to mention the 1963 Moscow Partial Test Ban Treaty, the 1967 Convention concerning peaceful utilization of the outer space and the 1968 Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

These steps have significantly contributed to the slowing down of the nuclear arms race and the creation of conditions favouring other measures that may lead to further reduction, and ultimately total elimination of nuclear weapons.

II. Weapons of mass destruction are a class of weapons that includes also agents of chemical and bacteriological (biological) warfare. The danger inherent in these weapons has been particularly strongly exposed in the report of the Secretary-General on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (A/7575). The danger derives among others from the fact that these weapons can be manufactured relatively cheaper and easier than is the case with nuclear weapons. Thus, any country not necessarily technologically advanced or industrially developed could manufacture or acquire a capability in this type of warfare.

Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons are weapons of mass destruction that pose a threat to the whole of mankind. Their use has been declared a crime against humanity and a violation of the generally recognized principles of international law as well as the UN Charter.

One of the principal goals of the international community in the field of disarmament should therefore be an effort aimed at ensuring that the prohibition of use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons is strictly and universally