

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
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AND YUGOSLAVIA

Working Paper on a proposed declaration by the United Nations
General Assembly regarding prohibition of the use of chemical
and biological methods of warfare

The General Assembly,

Considering that chemical and biological methods of warfare have always been viewed with horror and been justly condemned by the international community;

Considering that these methods of warfare are inherently reprehensible, because their effects are often uncontrollable and unpredictable and may be injurious without distinction to combatants and non-combatants and because any use would entail a serious risk of escalation;

Recalling that successive international instruments have prohibited or sought to prevent the use of such methods of warfare;

Noting specifically in this regard

that the majority of States then in existence adhered to the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925,

that since then further States have become Parties to that Protocol,

that yet other States have declared that they will abide by its principles and objectives,

that these principles and objectives have commanded broad respect in the practice of States, and

that the General Assembly, without any dissenting vote, has called for the strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol,

Recognizing therefore, in the light of all the above circumstances, that a customary rule of international law prohibits the use in international armed conflicts of all biological and chemical methods of warfare, regardless of any technical developments;