

## STATEMENT

of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on issues concerning prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is convinced that achievement of global prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons is one of the fundamental prerequisites of the disarmament process to which vital interests of all countries and nations of the world are linked. Prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons would strengthen universal security, reduce the risk of a war conflict and facilitate building of relations on realistic foundations of balance of interests. On the contrary, existence and perfection of chemical weapons pose a direct threat to stability and peace both in Europe and world wide.

In this context, it is disquieting that the efforts exerted for many years in the United Nations and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva with a view to concluding a Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and on their destruction have not yet produced the desired result.

In view of the especially grave danger that would result from accumulation, deployment and use of chemical weapons, including binary weapons, in Europe, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is determined to continue to strive for implementation of the proposal for the establishment of a chemical weapons-free zone in Europe which it has, jointly with the Government of the German Democratic Republic, addressed to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. In this regard, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic proceeds on the basis of unity and mutually supportive nature of regional and global approaches to arms limitation and disarmament and also of the fact that progress in disarmament is closely linked with positive developments in all spheres of international relations.

This line guides also the Czechoslovak initiative aimed at establishing a zone of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations on the dividing line between the member States of the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization put forward in February 1988 by the General-Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Milos JAKES.

Responding to the respective Declaration of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Government of Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is ready to start without delay talks on removal of chemical weapons from or their non-deployment in Central Europe, as the case may be, inclusive of application of corresponding verification measures. Holding such talks would mean at the same time giving the needed impetus to acceleration of progress towards global prohibition of chemical weapons.

Conclusion of a convention on the complete and comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles is considered by us to be one of the tasks of priority in the field of disarmament as were set forth at the latest session of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty held in Warsaw in July 1988. In this connection, encouragement may be drawn also from certain positive results achieved during the consideration of the issue of prohibition of chemical weapons at the forty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, especially the unanimous expression by United Nations member States of support for the formulation of the respective convention.