

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 581st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

As announced at our last plenary meeting, I will put before the Conference today for adoption the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, contained in document CD/1046. We shall first listen to the statements scheduled for today and then proceed immediately afterwards to take that action.

Mr. CALDERON (Peru) (translated from Spanish): This morning, I wish to read out a statement on behalf of the Group of 21 concerning the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

(continued in English)

As in previous years, the Group of 21 would like to emphasize once again that the goal of the negotiations under way in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is to conclude a comprehensive and non-discriminatory multilateral convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction.

On 4 December 1990, the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 45/57 A, which refers, inter alia, to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. In this resolution the General Assembly stressed once again its conviction of the "necessity that every effort be exerted for the successful conclusion of negotiations on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction". The General Assembly also expressed "its regret and concern 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". Furthermore, it strongly urged the Conference on Disarmament, "as a matter of highest priority, to intensify during its 1991 session its efforts to resolve outstanding issues, and to conclude its negotiations on a convention, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives, and to re-establish its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons for that purpose".

This year the urgency of concluding a chemical weapons convention is reinforced by the present circumstances in the international arena, which are detrimental to peace and security. The Group of 21 continues to believe that the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons should include a reference to the total prohibition of the use of chemical weapons in order to be consistent with the General Assembly resolutions successively adopted in previous years since, in its view, this undertaking is already provided for in article I, paragraph 3 of the draft Convention. This element is of paramount importance to the Group as well as to the vast majority of all members of the Conference.