The Chemical Weapons Working Group is one of several such groups established by the forty-member Committee on Disarmament, the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva, which meets each year from early February until late August. The working groups have facilitated consideration in depth of issues on its agenda.

Mr. McPhail was appointed Ambassador to the Committee on Disarmament in 1979 at which time he also became Permanent Representative to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva.