

Statement by the Group of 21 on the "Proposed  
Revisions to the Rolling Text"

The Group of 21 takes note of the bilateral agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on destruction and non-production of chemical weapons and on measures to facilitate the multilateral convention on banning chemical weapons signed on 1 June 1990. It considers the decision by the USSR and the United States to halt the production of chemical weapons and to start the destruction of the bulk of their declared chemical weapons stockpiles to be an important and positive step. The Group hopes that this agreement shall enter into force in the near future.

However, the Group of 21 regrets the proposed revisions to the present draft convention as contained in CD/CW/WP.303 which will have negative effects because they, *inter alia*, put conditions and postpone the decision for the total elimination of chemical weapons, give rights to States based on the possession of chemical weapons, and create a situation of legal uncertainty about the scope and the implementation of the multilateral convention. The Group emphasizes that the ultimate goal must be a non-discriminatory convention of a universal adherence.

The Group of 21 is convinced that the bilateral agreement should not be the model for a multilateral treaty and believes that there should be no deviation from the principal undertakings in the present draft convention. In this regard, the Group of 21 is of the view that the total destruction of all chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities should be unconditional and decided from the very conclusion of the convention as already provided for in the present draft convention so that by the end of the 10 years destruction period all chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities would be totally eliminated. This undertaking should be without any reservation.

The Group of 21 reaffirms its position that the future convention on chemical weapons should prohibit the use of such weapons under any circumstances from the date the convention enters into force. This undertaking is already provided for in article I, paragraph 3, of the draft convention.

The Group of 21 opposes any measures which are aimed at establishing a non-proliferation régime in the field of chemical weapons. In its view, non-proliferation in all its aspects can only be achieved through a total and comprehensive ban of chemical weapons.