

COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

CD, 330
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GROUP OF 21

Working Paper

Establishment of subsidiary organs

The following addition to rule 25 of the rules of procedure of the Committee on Disarmament is hereby proposed:

The rule of consensus shall not be used either in such a way as to prevent the establishment of subsidiary organs for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee, in accordance with the priorities established in the Final Document and in conformity with the provisions of rule 23.

Commentary

Since February 1980, the Group of 21, in its statement issued on the 27th of that month as document CD, 64, declared that it was "the considered view of the Group of 21 that working groups are the best available machinery for conduct of concrete negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament". It added therefore that "the Group of 21 in principle supports the establishment of working groups on the items on its annual agenda".

This position of the Group of 21 has been subsequently reiterated in the statements CD/72 of 4 March 1980, CD/116 of 9 July 1980, CD/134 of 6 August 1980, CD/180 of 24 April 1981, CD/181 of the same date and CD/192 of 8 July 1981.

For reasons well known to all members of the Committee it has been so far impossible to implement the well substantiated proposal which the Group of 21 has submitted since two years ago for the creation of a working group on item 2 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", in spite of the fact that such proposal has had the support of more than 30 members of the Committee. During the current year another proposal of the Group of 21 — which seems to have the support of 38 of the 40 members of the Committee — for the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" has not been carried out because of the negative attitude of two members of the Committee.

The Group of 21 believes that the paralysis of an important section of the negotiating function of the Committee which has thus occurred is contrary to the spirit of the rule of consensus included in rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Committee. Consequently the Group has decided to submit this working paper with the intention that

it may be studied by the members of the Committee during its recess. Thus, if, upon initiation of the Committee's session corresponding to 1985, it were not yet possible to give effect to the two above-mentioned requests of the Group of 21, the addition to the rules of procedure herein proposed may be formally considered in plenary session by the Committee.