

February 24, 1997

**The Honorable Trent Lott
487 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-2403**

Dear Senator Lott:

We, the undersigned scientists, urge you to work as a matter of national urgency to bring the Chemical Weapons Convention to a vote in the Senate before April 29 of this year. That is the date when the Convention will automatically enter into force, with or without the United States.

Negotiated by the administrations of Presidents Reagan and Bush, and signed by the United States under President Bush in January 1993, the Convention was formally submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent to ratification by President Clinton in November 1993. Since then it has been the subject of thirteen hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services and the Select Committee on Intelligence. The Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Director of Central Intelligence and the representatives of the Chemical Manufacturers Association have all testified strongly in favor of ratification. More than 65 countries, including all of our major allies, have ratified.

If the Senate fails even to vote on the CWC, after three administrations have been its leading architects and proponents, the United States will have surrendered by default its essential leadership in combating the proliferation of chemical weapons.

Respectfully,

**(All signatories are members of the United States
National Academy of Sciences in the field of chemistry or biochemistry)**

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Sidney Altman***

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(148 signatures on file)

* Nobel Laureate

PRESS RELEASE

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CHEMISTS URGE SENATE VOTE ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS TREATY

**Monday
24 February 1997**

One hundred forty-eight distinguished chemists have called upon Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott "as a matter of national urgency" to seek action on ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The chemists, all members of the United States National Academy of Sciences, said in their letter to Lott released today that "If the Senate fails even to vote on the Chemical Weapons Convention, after three administrations have been its leading architects and proponents, the United States will have surrendered by default its essential leadership in combating the proliferation of chemical weapons".

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(The letter to Senator Lott is enclosed)