

SPAIN

Working Paper

TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF A CONVENTION ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS

INTRODUCTION

During the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons of the Committee on Disarmament held in 1981 and 1982, substantive progress was achieved, particularly with regard to the technical issues affecting the various clauses of the Convention under study. Problems do, however, persist, but solutions will emerge, thanks to the spirit of collaboration of all the countries concerned, which will contribute their experience and information to the obviation of the difficulties.

Spain, which gave up the manufacture of chemical warfare agents on an industrial scale some time ago, is very interested in the success of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, for it would enable a convention to be drafted in the very near future.

In the Report of the Chairman to the Working Group on Chemical Weapons on the consultations held with experts on technical issues on 10 August 1982 (1) suggestions were made for the agenda of the meeting of experts in the spring of 1983. We submit in this working paper a series of considerations and suggestions on some of the topics concerned.

I. Material for lists of agents in the category of "other harmful chemicals" and for the list of important precursors to be considered

The technological progress of the last century has brought with it great advances in chemistry, with the result that numerous chemicals can now be produced synthetically. What with these and natural substances, there exist in the world today more than 4 million chemicals, of which more than 60,000 are in common use in agriculture, forestry, industry, the home, medicine, cosmetics and so on. Approximately 1,000 new products are put on the market each year.