

Description of the presentation

In the Conference on Disarmament, on 6 August 1987, the Soviet side, in order to build an atmosphere of trust, and with a view to the early conclusion of an international convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons and the elimination of stockpiles thereof, invited participants in the chemical weapons negotiations to visit the Soviet military facility at Shikhany to acquaint themselves with standard chemical munitions and with a technology for the destruction of chemical weapons at a mobile unit.

The presentation was scheduled for 3 and 4 October 1987.

Invitations to the presentation were issued to the representatives of 51 States participating in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. The programme is attached.

In total, the presentation was attended by more than 130 persons from 45 States, including 15 heads of delegations to the Conference on Disarmament, 2 representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, as well as military specialists, experts and advisers.

The presentation was covered by 56 representatives of the mass media, including 20 from foreign countries.

In inviting participants in the negotiations on a chemical weapons ban to visit the Shikhany military facility, the Soviet side was guided by the interests of a full, effective and verifiable ban on chemical weapons and by its desire to contribute in all possible ways to strengthening an atmosphere of trust in the negotiations. The presentation was a concrete manifestation of the Soviet Union's new approach to the solution of international problems.

Together with the proposals aimed at agreement without delay on a convention banning chemical weapons which the Soviet Union has put forward in the negotiations, and with other acts such as the halting of the manufacture of chemical weapons by the Soviet Union, the presentation at Shikhany pursued the goal of showing readiness to conclude an international convention on such weapons.

Those attending the presentation were flown from Moscow to a military airfield near the Shikhany facility in Aeroflot aircraft.

They were welcomed to the Shikhany facility by Colonel-General V.K. Pikalov, Commander of Chemical Warfare Troops of the USSR Ministry of Defence, in the facility's club (text attached).

The Commander of the Shikhany facility, Major-General R.F. Razuvanov, described to them the layout and the main zones of the facility, and the purposes for which they are used (text and sketch map of the facility attached).

During the presentation of standard chemical munitions, the participants were presented with four reports concerning chemical artillery munitions, chemical warheads for tactical missiles, air-launched chemical munitions, and chemical agents for close combat (texts of the reports and diagrams of the standard munitions, with combat characteristics, attached).