

Use of Toxicity Categories

The current understanding of toxicity categories including supertoxic lethal chemicals had already been incorporated into CD/416 in 1983. They were defined as chemical weapons "except such chemicals intended for purposes not prohibited by the Convention..." and were so categorized only on the basis of a toxicity criterion with a "median lethal dose which is less than or equal to 0.5 mg/kg...", and this definition remains in the current rolling text (CD 881).

It follows from this that the draft CWC recognizes that there are, in principle, STLCs that are chemical weapons and those that are not. There has been little debate on the consequences of this division until recently. In CD/636 in 1985 a category of "STLC with no use as a chemical weapon" was proposed with the caveat " ...shall be strictly limited to these amounts which can be justified for such purposes". The way in which such chemicals could be included or excluded from that category remained to be elaborated.

In January 1986, a formal attempt to develop lists of chemicals in order to allow the elaboration of verification regimes was made in CD/651. The listings A, B and C were made to permit the "...establishment of sound criteria for identifying relevant chemicals". Thus the relatively detailed elaboration of non-chemical weapon STLCs was lost and replaced in CD/727 of fall 1986 by the brief statement that each State Party has the right to "...develop, produce, otherwise acquire, retain, transfer and use toxic chemicals and their precursors for purposes not prohibited by the Convention". In the course of these developments Annex VI.[1] was proposed for STLCs with the general proviso that the annexes would include "toxic chemicals.... which could be used for purposes prohibited by