

The need to agree internationally a list of these important precursors has been underlined by confirmation by the United Nations of the use of mustard and the nerve agent Tabun in the Gulf war. In the light of this report the United Kingdom Government has imposed new export controls on compounds which could be used to make such weapons. Similar action has been taken by other governments, in particular by the governments of our partners in the European Community and by the United States and Canada. The need for this action has emphasized more than ever that a mechanism is required for the verification of non-production of chemical weapons to give assurance that these precursors are not being made in quantities unjustified by civil uses and transformed into chemical weapons.

In the view of my delegation a regime on these lines to verify non-production would make a valuable contribution to confidence in the convention without intruding unnecessarily in the chemical industry of States parties. The Netherlands delegation has provided a valuable analysis in their Working Paper CD/454 of the practical implications of such arrangements. The size of the inspectorate required for this purpose would seem to be a manageable one. Unlike the verification of destruction of stocks and of production facilities, which would be limited in time, it would be a continuing task for the Consultative Committee and its secretariat, which would also have the separate task of monitoring the possession and very limited production of super-toxic lethal compounds for permitted purposes.

Close consultation with national chemical industries will be needed both in the formulation and in the implementation of arrangements for verification of non-production. The example of the IAEA system of safeguards shows how inspections can be carried out in close co-operation with the industry being inspected. The IAEA secretariat enjoy the confidence of the nuclear industry in the wide range of countries all over the world where their safeguards system is in operation. At the same time they command international respect for the thoroughness and reliability of their operations. My own Government has consulted fruitfully with representatives of the British chemical industry, through its co-ordinating body, the Chemical Industries Association. We have been heartened by their positive response and encouraged by their interest in our negotiation for a convention to ban chemical weapons.

CD/PV.272

p.22

Algeria/Ould-Rouis

12.7.84

VER

In other cases, reference is made to the difficulties in designing and establishing a reliable verification system to reject proposals for negotiating agreements on allegedly "difficult to verify" or "non verifiable" measures.

The concern of States to seek a verification system which can assure them that their partners are implementing all the provisions of the agreements entered into is, of course, a legitimate one. Indeed, is it not in the interest of all parties that reliable verification measures should be taken under each agreement?

However, such a system must be based on the means in existence at the time of negotiation of each agreement. The demand for a system which must be absolutely reliable can only postpone agreement. Furthermore, there can be no question but that the danger arising from the lack of any agreement is infinitely greater than the hypothetical violation of an agreement by a party; and, besides, such an act would render the author liable to consequences which have a deterrent effect.