

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons

Statement made by Ambassador Gérard Errera of France in the
Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons on 26 August 1992

The French delegation considers that the text of the draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, contained in document CD/CW/WP.400/Rev.2, represents a delicate equilibrium taking account of many interests, and that the results achieved during the recent intensive negotiations are to be commended for the following reasons.

I - The convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons will lead to a substantial improvement in international security.

This draft convention constitutes the first multilateral disarmament agreement accompanied by an effective verification regime eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction:

- It prohibits not only the production, but also the acquisition, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and military preparations for their use, as well as assistance to anyone to engage in activities prohibited under the convention;
- The prohibition encompasses CW agents as such but also their means of delivery and any device designed to allow the use of chemical weapons;
- Any State party which possesses chemical weapons or has abandoned such weapons on the territory of other States parties is under an obligation to destroy such weapons, as well as all production facilities, in accordance with the relevant provisions of this draft convention.

Hence this is indeed a truly comprehensive ban.

Moreover, the draft convention constitutes an effective tool to deter the development of covert chemical weapons programmes, thanks to an unprecedented verification regime.