

Working Document

Creation of Chemical Weapons Control Capacity -  
Present Phase and Goals of the Finnish Project

1. The need for the prohibition of chemical weapons is widely recognized as a question of high priority. This question has been on the agenda of multilateral disarmament negotiations for almost two decades. A commitment to reach an early agreement on the banning of chemical weapons is stated i.a. in Article IX of the Biological Weapons Convention, and the urgency of the matter has been reiterated in several resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly.

2. Believing that all nations, whether parties to multilateral negotiations or not, have a vital interest in promoting disarmament and a duty to do whatever they can to pave the way towards this goal, the Government of Finland has endeavoured to make practical contributions to the negotiations on a ban of chemical weapons. Since 1973 Finland has been carrying out experimental research for the creation, on the national basis, of a chemical weapons control capacity, which could be put to international use. The progress of the project has been described in working papers and handbooks that Finland has annually presented to the CCD and the CD. They are the following:

- on definitions of chemical warfare agents and technical possibilities for verification and control of c-weapons with particular regard to a Finnish project on creation of a national basis of a CW control capacity for possible future international use (CCD/381, 1972),
- on the progress of the Finnish project for the creation of a national basis of a CW control capacity for possible future international use (CCD/412, 1973),
- on methodology for chemical identification of CW agents and related compound - progress of a Finnish research project (CCD/432, 1974, CCD/453, 1975, CCD/501, 1976),
- chemical and instrumental verification of organophosphorus warfare agents (CCD/544, 1977),
- an analytical technique for the verification of chemical disarmament - trade analysis by glass capillary gas chromatography with specific detectors (CCD/577, 1978),
- chemical identification of chemical weapons agents - a Finnish project (CD/14, 1979),
- identification of degradation products of potential organophosphorus warfare agents (CD/103, 1980).

3. The Finnish project concentrates on the development of methodology necessary for a detailed trace analysis of any control samples that could be collected to verify a ban of chemical weapons. After the development of satisfactory methodology and the corresponding data bank, problems connected with the collection of samples will be studied.