

Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons

CHINA

On the Prohibition Regime of the Future Convention
Banning Chemical Weapons

I

The idea of including a prohibition of the use in the scope of a future convention on chemical weapons has now been accepted by a number of delegations. However, a new question is raised by some other delegations concerning the relationship between the two prohibition regimes respectively contained in the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the future convention should the prohibition of use be included in the scope of the future convention. It is obvious that a proper solution of the problem will contribute to an early agreement on the scope of prohibition in negotiations.

II

The Chinese delegation believes that the two regimes should be in line with each other. Should there be any difference between the two, problems would arise which would be similar to those we have already encountered during negotiations when such a prohibition of use was not supposedly to be included in the scope of the convention.

For instance, it would be necessary to differentiate areas which come under the prohibition regime of Protocol and which would come under the regime of the future convention. The next step would be to seek a remedy to the deficiency of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the verification of compliance. As is shown by experience, these issues alone are too complicated to allow of an easy solution, let alone certain man-made difficulties which are likely to be encountered.

If, however, the two regimes could be brought in line with each other, all the difficulties mentioned above would be rid of, because any failure of compliance with one of the regimes would simultaneously be a failure with the other. And this failure of compliance could be dealt with according to the verification provisions or other relevant provisions possibly contained in the future convention.

III

There exists such a basis for bringing these two regimes in line with each other. That is, to prohibit the direct or indirect use of the toxic physiological effects of chemical substances for fighting purposes. It is not only the obligation provided for in the 1925 Geneva Protocol (the field of biological warfare is not referred to here, this being outside the range of our present discussion) but is