

A related problem, also limited in time, is the verification of destruction of production facilities which has been actively considered in Working Group A of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. My own Government demonstrated to the members of the Committee on Disarmament in 1979 the complete demolition of the only facility in the United Kingdom for the manufacture of nerve gases after the remaining stocks of these agents had been destroyed.

In order to give stability to the Convention it will also be necessary to include in it provisions to give assurance that chemical weapons are not being made clandestinely, especially after the destruction of existing stocks has been completed. To this end my delegation introduced last year document CD/353 on the verification of non-production of chemical weapons. This included suggestions for declarations on the production for civil use of certain compounds, and, in some cases, verification by random routine inspections of the declarations, and of the fact that the compounds in question were not being transformed into chemical weapons. This type of random routine inspection was proposed for certain key precursors, which are not themselves chemical warfare agents, but are important intermediates in their synthesis. The aim of such routine inspections would be to provide assurance that chemical warfare agents were not being clandestinely produced by providing a routine check on the main synthetic pathways by which such agents might be made.

The annex to the United Kingdom Working Paper CD/353 contained a list of key precursors which had previously been drawn up at a meeting of experts, under the aegis of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Sujka. Document CD/353 contained a request to other delegations for information about the extent to which these compounds were made in other countries for civil purposes. We are grateful to those delegations which have responded. Some of the data they gave us were circulated at the end of the 1983 session in Working Paper CD/CW/WP.57. We hope that other delegations will provide similar data in time for inclusion in a further working paper at the end of the current session.

After consideration of these data and discussion with other delegations, the United Kingdom delegation has now circulated a further Working Paper with the symbol CD/514, which I have pleasure in introducing today. In this Working Paper a classification of compounds is proposed according to the risk that they might be used as chemical warfare agents or as precursors for them. It is hoped that this classification, based on objective criteria, will help the Conference towards a consensus on the identification of compounds that need to be subject to declarations and monitoring. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany has rightly drawn attention, in its Working Paper CD/439, to the fact that a similar list is required in connection with the transfer of key precursors to other countries. As pointed out in that Working Paper, some of the compounds in question have significant civil uses. In the view of my delegation it would not be possible to exclude from control all substances in this category. We also share the doubts of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany as to whether it would be practicable to determine the list of key precursors entirely on the basis of theoretical criteria. These would be helpful in guiding the choice of compounds for the list or lists, but we believe that for operational purposes, whether declaration, export control, or routine inspection on the territory of a State party, it will be important that the compounds be listed by name. The United States delegation has used this approach in the schedules contained in document CD/500. The initial lists would clearly need to be agreed as an integral part of the convention we are negotiating. My delegation believes, however, that a mechanism for modifying the list or lists under the aegis of the Consultative Committee should be incorporated into the convention to take account of possible future advances in technology. The present paper is designed to stimulate discussion of these issues and provide a basis for further work.