

FRANCE

## The non-production of chemical weapons

1. The discussions concerning the activities not prohibited by the convention that were conducted within the framework of article VI of the convention during the 1986 sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons revealed the extreme complexity of the problem but also enabled its limits to be determined.

Thus, the problems to be resolved in the particularly sensitive area of compliance by all parties with the convention must take into account not only the existing and declared chemical weapons and the means of production pertaining thereto, but also the potential inherent in an industry that manufactures entirely legally and for altogether lawful needs chemical products that could be diverted for arms purposes: key precursors of supertoxic lethal chemicals, supertoxic lethal chemicals in general use for non-hostile purposes, known toxic substances that have already been used as chemical weapons but are manufactured in very large quantities. Very special attention will have to be given to the new possibilities offered by technologies that, it is clear, are bound to develop in the decades to come.

Suitable verification or monitoring measures will have to be found for each of these spheres.

Such measures cannot be fixed once and for all, but will have to be evolutionary in nature so that they fulfil their aim many years after the entry into force of the convention, without harming the legitimate economic interests of any country.

How can imperatives that, while intimately linked, are so different be reconciled?

One way of approaching this task would be to make an exhaustive analysis of all the problems there may be at the present time, to project that analysis into the future and to propose such solutions as occur to us today. Apart from the fact that the outcome of such work would, in any event, be imperfect and complicated, the elaboration of a convention of that kind would require a considerable amount of time. It seems to us, on the other hand, that, while the convention must be firm and intransigent as regards its purposes and principles, it must be a living institution as regards its application. It must, indeed, be capable of adjustment to all the technological advances that will inevitably occur both in the chemical industry and in the sphere of control.