

It is clear from the above definition and its specific content that:

(1) The definition proposed brings within its scope all chemical warfare agents.

(2) The definition proposed embodies the principle of using mainly the general-purpose criterion but combining it with the toxicity criterion. That is to say, that chemical warfare agents must possess some degree of toxicity, but toxic substances are not necessarily all chemical warfare agents. Therefore even though toxicity is an important criterion of chemical warfare agents, it is not the only criterion; whether or not a substance is a chemical warfare agent, should mainly depend on whether it is used for "hostile purposes". This is also the main indication for distinguishing dual-purpose chemical warfare agents.

(3) The definition proposed also reflects the scope of activities to be prohibited -- that is all the stages of the entire process from the development right up to the use of chemical warfare agents. Some chemical substances can be determined as being chemical warfare agents, only when they are connected with certain specific activities, e.g. substances such as phosgene, hydrogen cyanide can be clearly identified as chemical warfare agents only when they have filled munitions and developed into weapons, whereas irritants would be included as substances to be prohibited only when they are utilized on the battlefield. Proceeding from this characteristic of chemical warfare agents, it can also be clearly seen why in any convention prohibiting chemical weapons, the prohibition of use is an issue which cannot be evaded.