
Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons

Finland and the Netherlands

Working Paper

THE NETWORK OF LABORATORIES UNDER THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Possible structure and functions

Summary

Under the Chemical Weapons Convention several analytical and related tasks have to be fulfilled, such as the analyses of samples taken by inspectors, the compilation and updating of the analytical chemical data base, the development and testing of verification instruments, the training of inspectors to use these instruments, the handling and transport of samples, quality control of participating "Accredited Laboratories", etc.

In this paper a short analysis is made of the different functions which various laboratories can have under the Chemical Weapons Convention, in particular the "Laboratory of the Technical Secretariat" and the "Accredited Laboratories" in States Parties certified by the Organization to perform specific analytical and other tasks.

There are two main options:

1. A centralized structure: a substantial central laboratory performing most of the required tasks. A limited number of tasks would be left for "Accredited Laboratories".
2. A decentralized structure: most of the tasks would be performed by "Accredited Laboratories" on request. The "Laboratory of the Technical Secretariat" would be modest, would only carry out those tasks which cannot be done elsewhere, but it would play a stimulating and coordinating role.

It is concluded that the second option is preferable.