

## AUSTRALIA

Reply at this stage submitted by the Australian Delegation to the questionnaire relating to chemical weapons submitted by the Netherlands to the Committee on Disarmament in Document CD/41

1. We agree that a CW Convention should be comprehensive.
- 2.(a) We agree that CW agents and delivery systems should not be developed.
  - (b) We agree to a ban on the production of all single purpose CW agents and all single purpose precursors.
  - (c) We agree to a ban on the production for chemical weapons purposes of dual purpose agents and dual purpose precursors. Lethal agents and incapacitating agents should be prohibited. We share the view that herbicides and defoliants are more appropriately covered by the ENMOD Convention and it would not therefore be necessary to include these in a CW Convention. It would not be appropriate, in our view, to include non-toxic riot control agents. These have some legitimate and humane uses and do not cause lasting harm to civilian populations.
  - (d) We agree that the ban should cover the destruction of existing stockpiles of chemical warfare agents and weapons systems. We appreciate that the time necessary for the destruction of stockpiles is influenced by the size of the existing stocks and by the stringent safety requirements required during destruction to ensure the safety of personnel and the environment. We have noted that one current estimate is that the destruction process could take of the order of ten years.
  - (e) We agree that the Convention should cover the dismantling, "moth-balling" or conversion to peaceful use of existing facilities. Because of the greater difficulties involved in verification of a "moth-balled" or converted facility our preference is for the complete dismantling of existing CW facilities.
  - (f) We agree with the banning of production of munitions, equipment and means of delivery for CW purposes.