

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Disarmament, non-proliferation and co-operation are key responsibilities addressed by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The Canadian National Authority, situated within the Nuclear, Non-proliferation and Disarmament Implementation Agency (IDN), is the focal point for liaison with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), domestic stakeholders and other states parties. The National Authority's mandate was embodied in 1995 in Canada's CWC ratification and implementation legislation: An Act to Implement the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons.

State party Declarations are provided to the OPCW in accordance with a strict timetable. Declarations are prepared by domestic stakeholders, based on the Convention's Scheduled Chemicals, and forwarded to the National Authority. Information provided by domestic stakeholders to the National Authority is protected against unauthorized access. State party Declarations are subject to international verification by routine or challenge inspections. The National Authority is responsible for ensuring the smooth conduct of such inspections. As well, a state party may be asked to provide assistance and protection to another state party in case of the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons.

While the Canadian National Authority seeks to ensure the effective implementation of Canada's CWC obligations, it takes care not to place an undue burden on domestic stakeholders. The National Authority's principal functions include:

-
- compiling and forwarding Declarations to the OPCW;
 - supporting the conduct of inspections;
 - supporting Canada's delegation to the OPCW;
 - liaising with the OPCW and other states parties;
 - organizing outreach activities to ensure awareness of the Convention and its obligations by domestic stakeholders; and
 - consulting with domestic stakeholders on declarations, licensing regulations, and inspections modalities.
-