



voluntarily surrender. As a result, the task of actually constructing such a system was ignored. Indeed it was dismissed as being irrelevant. The simplified type of system used by the superpowers in the bilateral treaties runs into serious difficulties when it is applied to multilateral treaties. For one thing, it relies too heavily on the principle of self-help. Each side evaluates the compliance data and decides how to respond to perceived violations without involving the international community. For example, in response to the alleged Soviet violations at Krasnoyarsk, the US has taken a whole series of diplomatic measures against the Soviets in an effort to persuade them to rectify that particular violation. The latest is a threat to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Whatever else we might think of the Krasnoyarsk issue, it gives a good demonstration of how the self-help type of verification system operates in the field of response.

#### Self-help for the powerful

The difficulty with trying to use a self-help type of verification system for multilateral treaties is that it works better for the superpowers than for the rest of the world. The non-superpowers do not generally have the sophisticated equipment needed to conduct the various surveillance and inspection procedures that appear in arms control treaties. Nor are they as able to bring about compliance by potential adversaries. They do not possess the same diplomatic and economic clout. Furthermore, the fact that the full-scope system is multilateral and allows all parties to participate means that it is generally preferred among non-superpower nations over systems based on the self-help principle. Also, when there is a multitude of parties, the principle of every-man-for-himself, when applied to data collection, evaluation and response, may be unworkable.

It is interesting to note, however, that despite these problems, in the case of the ten multilateral treaties that lack a full-scope system, the superpowers appear to have had no great difficulty in persuading the other signatories to accept the self-help system. Possibly the reason was that these treaties seemed to be targeted more on the superpowers than on the rest of the world.

#### Proposed Chemical Weapons Convention

But when it came to negotiating the new Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the superpowers were faced with a different

situation. Obviously the rest of the world was going to be much more deeply involved than in the case of the ten treaties noted. Any nation could make and employ poison gas, for example, and so superpowers have always been anxious to have a chemical weapons ban signed by as many countries as possible. This meant that representatives of middle and smaller powers had to be invited to participate in the drafting process. Even so, the forum used for this purpose (the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva) involves only forty countries. Its smaller size no doubt was intended to quicken the negotiating process.

As soon as the chemical weapons negotiations at the CD got down to the subject of verification, the superpowers were under pressure from some of the middle powers to accept the concept of an international agency to administer the Treaty's verification system. Early in the negotiations, the superpowers were prepared to admit that some type of international body would be necessary, but they insisted that it be prohibited from making decisions except by consensus. Such a body of course is not a genuine agency. It is simply a forum for attempting to arrive at agreement. It would be powerless to deal with a violation, since the delinquent party would have a veto. The name proposed for this body in those days was "Consultative Committee," which fitted the restricted role that was being proposed for it at that time. Those who argue in favor of consensus decisions generally point out that, when standards of behavior among nations are being adopted, consensus is highly desirable or even imperative. Others admit this point but argue that, once such standards have been adopted, as in a treaty, consensus is wholly inappropriate for the body implementing the treaty.

Nevertheless, the superpowers stuck to their position on consensus for many years. All during that time, in the negotiations for the CWC, there was virtually nothing achieved on the political structure of the agency, or its voting procedures, or its powers, or how it would function in the area of evaluation and response.

#### Superpowers relax opposition

Eventually, the superpowers felt compelled to retreat. By April 1988 in the negotiations for the CWC, both had swung around at least to the point where they were agreeing to the concept of a genuine international agency — one with authority to make decisions by some kind of majority vote. This was a