

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons

NORWAY

Report on a National Trial Inspection of an Industrial Chemical Facility

Introduction

At the 1988 summer session of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons it was suggested that States should conduct national trial inspections of their chemical industry. The purpose of these inspections was to establish an effective verification of non-production of illegitimate products and at the same time protect legitimately sensitive and confidential business information. During the first national trial inspection in Norway it was regarded as important to identify the problems and obstacles encountered. On the basis of experience gained from several different trials, detailed procedures could be elaborated which would later help to clear the ground for multilateral trial inspections.

Norway conducted a national trial inspection in February 1990. The facility inspected was an organic chemical production plant in the private industrial sector. The facility produces a legitimate commercial product using a Schedule 3 chemical, thionyl chloride, which can also be used in the prohibited production of mustard gas. Thionyl chloride is not manufactured at the site, but is imported from another country under the special regulations covering the import of certain chemical compounds.