

SWEDENWorking PaperProhibition of retention or acquisition of a chemical warfare capability enabling use of chemical weapons (4 Annexes)

1. Sweden considers that in order to secure an effective abolition of chemical weapons and chemical warfare, it is not sufficient to prohibit development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. It is also necessary to prohibit activities, facilities and materials aimed at using chemical weapons in the battlefield or elsewhere in war. The reason for the Swedish position is that unless such an extended prohibition is accepted there would not exist any major difficulties for a Party either to retain or acquire the ability to use chemical weapons within a comparatively short time, were it to withdraw from a ban on development, production and stockpiling. This is illustrated in Annex I. If preparative activities aimed at the acquisition of a qualified capability to use chemical weapons were not prohibited, they would also not be subject to verification measures. This would undoubtedly cause the prospective parties to a convention to feel a lesser degree of security, and might lead to a reluctance on their part to adhere to such a convention. In Sweden's view these circumstances have to be taken into consideration in the drafting of the convention on chemical weapons now being negotiated in the CD. The following considerations appear relevant in this context.

2. A chemical warfare capability consists of two elements:

(a) ability (including resources) to use chemical weapons in a militarily effective way against an adversary,

(b) ability to perform combat duties on different levels in an environment contaminated through the use of chemical weapons, one's own or the adversary's, that is a protective capacity stretching from only surviving to actually continuing combat.

Both tasks require proper protective equipment and training. However, in order to use chemical weapons effectively some specific measures are required as exemplified in Annex I.

Recognizing the almost unanimously held view that a capability to protect oneself against attacks with chemical weapons is to be allowed in a chemical weapons convention, the Swedish delegation holds that the particular measures required to obtain or retain a capability to use chemical weapons could and ought to be prohibited in a convention. As discussed in the following, such a prohibition would -- apart from rendering it more meaningful -- increase significantly the possibilities to verify compliance thereof.

The expression used by Sweden so far to describe the suggested prohibition has been formulated "prohibition of planning, organization and training for a chemical warfare capability". This expression is to be taken as referring to a capability to use the chemical weapons.