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Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons

USSR

Working paper

Assessment of the proposal by France concerning "security stocks"

1. The USSR proceeds from the premise that the order of destruction must be based on the principle of undiminished security of States during the entire destruction process, as has already been agreed in the "rolling text". However, the French proposal concerning "security stocks", while proclaiming the same principle, does not in fact have the result of ensuring security.

2. The French proposal provides that the States parties to the convention will have the right to retain production capacities and manufacture chemical weapons, and also acquire such weapons, for at least eight years and possibly longer after the convention enters into force. Moreover, this right would be granted not only to States possessing chemical weapons, but also to those without them. As a result, States possessing chemical weapons could renew their stocks (within the limits of the "security stock"), while those without could establish such "security stocks". This constitutes in essence a call for the legalized build-up and proliferation of chemical weapons. This approach leads not to equal security but to increasing equal insecurity.

The security of the parties to the convention can be ensured immediately after its entry into force through the implementation of a number of measures which would safely freeze stocks at current levels until they are destroyed, and would rule out preparations for their use as well as actual use. This would involve, first and foremost, the declaration of all existing stocks, their placing under systematic international control with the help of on-site inspections and continuous monitoring with instruments, and the adoption of measures to ensure that the chemical weapons are not removed from the store