

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/CW/WP.375  
20 November 1991

Original: ENGLISH

Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons

## ITALY

### Italian experience of the destruction of old and obsolete chemical weapons

#### 1. Introduction

The Military Establishment of Nuclear, Bacteriological and Chemical (NBC) Defence and the Chemical, Physical and Biological Technical Center of the Italian Army are responsible, in Italy, for the problems relating to the destruction of the old stocks discovered on the national territory; both the Establishment and the Center are located in the Military Area of Santa Lucia - Civitavecchia - Rome, and are under the supervision of the General Direction of the Weapons, Ammunitions and Land Armaments.

Since the end of World War II the NBC Establishment was responsible for retrieving and stocking in safety the old stocks, found on the national territory.

In 1974 studies started for realization of a plant for the old stocks destruction, particularly of the mixture mustard-phenyldichloroarsine (Y-PhDA).

We learned from the analyses carried out by the Technical Center, with the collaboration of the Atmospheric Pollution Institute, that the above-mentioned mixture consisted of mustard (50 per cent), PhDA (45 per cent) and degradation products (mainly arsenic trichloride and hydrochloric acid) (5 per cent).

The Technical Center and NBC Establishment proposed two different chemical methods for the destruction of the mixture by oxidation and hydrolysis, the first method using, as oxidant, hydrogen peroxide, the second nitric acid.