

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

BASIC FACTS

- THERE HAVE BEEN RECURRENT EFFORTS TO APPLY ARMS CONTROL MEASURES TO BIOLOGICAL/TOXIN WEAPONS. THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL BANS THE USE IN WARFARE OF BIOLOGICAL/TOXIC WEAPONS.
- IN 1975, THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION (BTWC) ENTERED INTO FORCE BANNING PRODUCTION, DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS; THERE ARE CURRENTLY OVER 140 PARTIES TO THE BTWC, BUT SEVERAL KEY COUNTRIES (E.G., IRAQ) HAVE NOT YET ADHERED OR RATIFIED IT.

CURRENT CONCERNS

- PROGRESS IN GENETIC ENGINEERING AND IN THE OTHER FIELDS OF BIOSCIENCE HAS FACILITATED THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.
- A WEAKNESS OF THE BTWC IS THE LACK OF MEANINGFUL VERIFICATION PROVISIONS TO ADDRESS DOUBTS ABOUT COMPLIANCE.
- NOT ALL RELEVANT COUNTRIES ARE PARTY TO THE BTWC.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

- WE WILL SEEK TO STRENGTHEN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION BY DEVELOPING FURTHER ITS CONFIDENCE-BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROVISIONS AT THE REVIEW CONFERENCE THIS SEPTEMBER (IMPROVING EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION; WIDENING THE SCOPE OF THE EXCHANGE OF DATA). AS WELL, WE WILL SEEK THE AGREEMENT OF SIGNATORIES TO CONVENE A SPECIALLY MANDATED CONFERENCE, IN 1993, TO NEGOTIATE VERIFICATION PROVISIONS FOR THE CONVENTION.