

Presently it seems impossible to verify destruction without at least some limited on-site presence. Accordingly a second difficulty depends on the reluctance by some countries to agree to some forms of on-site activity with respect to verifying destruction of chemical weapons. They are arguing i.a. the risk for unwanted spread of secret information leading to proliferation. These thoughts were expressed by the Soviet delegation (CCD/PV. 647, p.18 and CCD/PV. 652 p. 19-20) saying that on-site verification of stockpile destruction would reveal the nature of a chemical warfare agent, which might otherwise perhaps have been kept secret. Such a disclosure could not only lead to the unwanted spread of knowledge but might also infringe on industrial rights.

Without disputing these claims the present Working Paper aims at showing in principle that effective on-site verification of destruction of stockpiles containing chemical warfare agents can be carried out without disclosing the chemical nature of the agent in question or infringing on industrial secrets.

To avoid complicating details in the present account conversion of agent stockpiles into peacefully useable chemicals is not treated here. However, similar thoughts can be applied also for that activity. See also below on destruction of stocks of dual-purpose agents.

Generally, rather satisfactory methods now seem to be available for on-site verification of destruction. Different aspects have been touched upon in many Working Papers through the years, e.g. CCD/324, 344, 366, 367, 432, 434, 436 and 453. Especially CCD/434 and 436 by the Canadian and United States delegations respectively make clear how complicated an affair it is to destroy chemical weapons but also that it is feasible. Verification of destruction of stockpiles is envisaged in the Japanese draft convention (CCD/420, 30 April 1974).

However, the use of toxicological verification, described below has so far not been analysed sufficiently. The discussion of this method and its implications for verification is the main purpose of this paper. The implications of chemical analysis for verification purposes are treated for comparison. The different options resulting from application of the two types of analysis alone or together are displayed in the attached scheme.

A successful verification of destruction performed according to carefully established conditions might be an important confidence building measure in trying out acceptable means of verification for a treaty prohibiting development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

Some aspects of such verification activities are outlined below.