

The Swedish delegation tables today a working paper (CCD/569) containing a summary of a methodological investigation of computerized scanning of chemical literature which has been carried out by Swedish experts. The aims of the investigation, the method used and the main results obtained are described in the working paper. It appears from the study that large savings with respect to manpower could be made. The number of literature references which it is necessary to evaluate can, for instance, be diminished to between 1 and 4 per cent of the total, using the types of search strategies formulated for the purpose of the investigation. It was also calculated that the likelihood of retrieving a relevant item by means of this method exceeded 80 per cent. The material studied exceeded 150,000 references to scientific and technical articles. It seems possible to improve the method and also to apply it to several more data bases. The method should of course be looked upon as one of many possible approaches to the problem of searching the enormous amount of published literature for pertinent information.

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The distinguished members of the Committee on Disarmament are well aware that the delegations of the USSR and the United States are conducting negotiations on the elaboration of a joint initiative on the prohibition of chemical weapons for submission to the Committee. Today I have the honour to announce, on behalf of the two delegations, a joint USSR-United States statement to the Committee on Disarmament on the state of these negotiations.

The United States and the Soviet Union believe that the future convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons should meet the objective of complete, effective, and verifiable prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and also provide for the destruction of chemical weapons. Discussions of measures relating to means of production of chemical munitions and chemicals covered by the convention are continuing.

Progress has been achieved in the area of the scope of the prohibition. As a result of accommodation by both sides, agreement in principle has now emerged on most, although not all, points in this area. Both sides share the opinion of the majority of CCD members that the principal criterion in determining the scope of the prohibition should be the general purpose criterion. Under that criterion, specific chemicals would be prohibited to the extent they have no justification for industrial research or other non-hostile civilian purposes, for non-hostile military purposes, in particular for protective purposes, or for military purposes not related to chemical warfare. Both sides have also reached the view that, for the purpose of facilitating verification, it would be appropriate to use two toxicity criteria and certain other provisions in addition to the general purpose criterion.

The United States and the Soviet Union are in agreement that the convention should contain provisions clearly specifying the procedure for declaring chemical weapons stockpiles. Some specific provisions of such a procedure have been agreed upon in principle. Both sides agree that States parties to the future convention should also make declarations relating to the means of production of chemical munitions and chemicals covered by the convention, but the actual content of such declarations is under continued negotiation. Provisions relating to measures concerning those means of production also require further negotiation.

The United States and the Soviet Union believe that the fulfilment of the obligations assumed under the future convention should be subject to the important requirement of