

Finally, my last point. Many delegations have rightly referred to the recent increase in the threat of war. This threat indeed hangs over all the countries in the world, but its source is not the Soviet Union, nor its mythical superiority, but the arms race itself, the continuing tension in the world. "This genuine, and not imaginary, threat", declared L.I. Brezhnev at the 26th Congress of the CPSU, "we are ready to combat—hand in hand with America, with the European States, with all the countries on our planet".<sup>16</sup>

### **Chinese Working Paper Submitted to the Committee on Disarmament: Definition of Chemical Warfare Agents, March 27, 1981**<sup>1</sup>

It is generally held that chemical weapons are composed of three elements: 1. The chemical warfare agent which produces a direct toxic effect on the target. 2. The chemical munitions or devices which are filled with the chemical warfare agents and disperse them into a combat state. 3. The launching system or means of delivery which sends such munitions or devices filled with the chemical warfare agent to the area of the target. The main element of the three is the chemical warfare agent, since the most essential difference between chemical weapons and conventional or other weapons lies in the former's reliance on the toxic effects of chemical warfare agents to produce lethal and injurious capabilities.

Chemical warfare agents should form the central contents for negotiations. In elaborating the Convention, it is imperative to first clearly ascertain the definition of chemical warfare agents. This definition will have a bearing on the scope and content of the prohibition, methods and means of verification, and will affect the solution of a whole series of problems including the destruction of chemical weapons and dismantling of production facilities. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out serious discussions on the question of the definition of chemical warfare agents, in order to reach a consensus at the earliest date.

Many delegations have already expressed their points of view in different forms on the question of definition of chemical warfare agents, and have advanced quite a number of useful proposals. In our view, it would not be difficult to draw up a scientific and generally acceptable definition of chemical warfare agents, on the basis of the reasonable portions of various viewpoints and proposals advanced in the CD.

In accordance with its basic position of the complete prohibition and total destruction of chemical weapons, the Chinese delegation is of the view that in determining a definition of chemical warfare agents, account should be taken of its comprehensiveness and accuracy. Its comprehen-

<sup>16</sup> Feb. 23, *ante*.

<sup>1</sup> CD/168.

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siveness is designed to ensure that all chemical warfare agents which ought  
 to be prohibited are in fact prohibited, and not leave any loopholes which  
 can be used for violations of the convention, its accuracy is designed to  
 avoid the prohibition of chemical substances which ought not to be pro-  
 hibited, as if they were chemical warfare agents, as this would have an  
 adverse effect on the development of industrial and agricultural produc-  
 tion and on scientific and technological progress.

Basing ourselves on above considerations, and having drawn upon the  
 reasonable portions of the proposals made by all sides, we wish to make a  
 preliminary proposal on the definition of chemical warfare agents for the  
 exploration of delegations.

We propose the following definition for chemical warfare agents:

*All chemical substances which are developed, produced, stockpiled and  
 used for hostile purposes, and whose toxic effects are used to interfere with  
 or destroy the normal functions of man, animal and plant in such a way as  
 to lead to death, temporary incapacitation or permanent injury, regardless  
 of whether these poisonous effects occur immediately or in delayed  
 fashion, and regardless of the origin and method of manufacture of these  
 substances, should all be considered chemical warfare agents.*

In accordance with above formulation of the definition, chemical war-  
 fare agents specifically include:

(1) Single-purpose chemical warfare agents: including lethal agents, in-  
 capacitating agents and blister agents.

(2) Dual-purpose chemical warfare agents: i.e. dual-purpose chemical  
 substances which have already been developed into weapons (such as  
 those which have filled munitions and whose quantity stockpiled no  
 longer indicates use for peaceful purposes.) Examples: phosgene,  
 hydrogen cyanide, etc. irritant agents and anti-plant agents.

(3) Potential chemical warfare agents: these are chemical substances  
 which have not yet been used as chemical warfare agents but which,  
 because of their toxicity and physical and chemical characteristics can be  
 or may be used as chemical warfare agents, e.g. dioxin, bicyclic phos-  
 phorous esters etc. This category of substances should be monitored, in  
 order to prevent their development into chemical warfare agents.

Here we are using the term "potential chemical warfare agents" to  
 replace the term "chemical agents" used in some documents, since we con-  
 sider the term "chemical agents" too broad in its meaning and does not ac-  
 curately express the relationship between it and chemical warfare agents.  
 The term "potential chemical warfare agents", however, does more ac-  
 curately reflect the concept which we wish to express.

(4) Precursors of chemical warfare agents: these themselves are not  
 chemical warfare agents, but in the course of the use of two or more than  
 two of this type of chemical substances, a reaction can be caused, thus  
 producing a chemical warfare agent.

(5) Biochemical warfare agents: these refer to other natural poisons  
 used as warfare agents not yet included in other relevant conventions, and  
 other substances similar to natural poisons or their active pieces which  
 have been artificially synthesized or semi-synthesized.

It is clear from the above definition and its specific content that:

(1) The definition proposed brings within its scope all chemical warfare agents.

(2) The definition proposed embodies the principle of using mainly the general-purpose criterion but combining it with the toxicity criterion. That is to say, that chemical warfare agents must possess some degree of toxicity, but toxic substances are not necessarily all chemical warfare agents. Therefore even though toxicity is an important criterion of chemical warfare agents, it is not the only criterion; whether or not a substance is a chemical warfare agent, should mainly depend on whether it is used for "hostile purposes". This is also the main indication for distinguishing dual-purpose chemical warfare agents.

(3) The definition proposed also reflects the scope of activities to be prohibited—that is all the stages of the entire process from the development right up to the use of chemical warfare agents. Some chemical substances can be determined as being chemical warfare agents, only when they are connected with certain specific activities, e.g. substances such as phosgene, hydrogen cyanide can be clearly identified as chemical warfare agents only when they have filled munitions and developed into weapons, whereas irritants would be included as substances to be prohibited only when they are utilized on the battlefield. Proceeding from this characteristic of chemical warfare agents, it can also be clearly seen why in any convention prohibiting chemical weapons, the prohibition of use is an issue which cannot be evaded.

**Chinese Working Paper Submitted to the Committee on Disarmament: Dismantling of Chemical Weapons Production Facilities, March 27, 1981<sup>1</sup>**

One of the most important measures for the complete prohibition and total destruction of chemical weapons and the prevention of chemical warfare is the prohibition of producing chemical weapons and the dismantling of their existing production facilities/means of production. This is because the industrial production of chemical weapons accounts for the most crucial link among the various activities aimed at the attainment of chemical warfare capability and the use of chemical weapons, i.e. development, production, stockpiling, acquisition and transfer of chemical weapons. Only those countries which can produce chemical weapons on a certain industrial scale are able to stockpile and transfer these weapons as well as to engage in chemical warfare. This has been proven by the history of the two World Wars. Therefore, the Chinese Delegation is of the opinion that:

1. The convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons, besides prohibiting in clear terms the production of chemical weapons, should

<sup>1</sup> CD/169.