

SYMMUN '16

March 26-27



BACKGROUND GUIDE- GA

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Delegates!

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you to the General Assembly I - Disarmament and Security Committee of the Symbiosis MUN 2016.

General Assembly is the most integral body of the United Nations, where every member state has an equal representation. The Disarmament and Security Committee deals with all disarmament related activities of the member states.

The agenda for this session is:

“Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons”

In light of the situation in the middle east, it is imperative for the world to discuss the scope of use of chemical and biological weapons in conflict affected areas. Use of these weapons could be disastrous, not only for the civilians residing in the regions, but also for the generations to come. Abiding by the requisite legal instruments regulating these weapons is of utmost priority.

This guide will act as a comprehensive introductory information material for the delegates, however please do not limit the scope of your research to this guide only. This will only serve as a document to give you direction, and cannot be quoted in the committee.

Looking forward to 2 days of intense debate and deliberations.

Regards

Amlan Panda

Chairperson

UNGA-DISEC, SYMMUN'16

INTRODUCTION

For more than 100 years, humanity has sought to outlaw weapons and methods of war with indiscriminate or particularly cruel effects – weapons of mass destruction and terror. The first Hague Peace Conference, held in 1899, adopted several rules for this purpose. After the extensive use of gas during the First World War, states bound themselves in the 1925 Geneva Protocol to prohibit the use of both chemical and biological weapons. In the closing days of the Second World War, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were incinerated with nuclear weapons. Since then, efforts have been under way worldwide to control their numbers, prevent their spread, prohibit their use and eliminate them.

Nuclear weapons kill by the effects of heat, blast, radiation and radio- active fallout. The attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed an estimated 200,000 people, virtually all civilians. The nuclear weapons in one strategic submarine have a combined explosive force several times greater than all the conventional bombs dropped in World War II.

Biological and toxin weapons kill by using pathogens to attack cells and organs in human bodies, although they can also be used to target crops and livestock on a massive scale. Some are contagious and can spread rapidly in a population, while others, including anthrax and ricin, infect and kill only those who are directly exposed. Toxins are poisons produced by biological organisms. Some (e.g. botulinum toxin) are lethal even in microscopic amounts.

Chemical weapons kill by attacking the nervous system and lungs, or by interfering with a body's ability to absorb oxygen. Some are designed to incapacitate by producing severe burns and blisters. Symptoms can appear immediately or be delayed for up to 12 hours after an attack. Persistent agents can remain in a target environment for as long as a week.

THREE KEY GLOBAL WMD TREATIES

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

The NPT seeks to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to pursue nuclear disarmament. It entered into force in 1970. In 1995, the duration of the NPT was extended indefinitely. 189 parties have joined the NPT, including the five nuclear-weapon states China, France, Russia, the UK and the US. India, Israel and Pakistan have not joined. and North Korea has announced its withdrawal from the treaty. More countries have acceded to the NPT than to any other arms limitation or disarmament agreement. The NPT represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon states.

CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION (BTWC)

The BTWC is the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning the acquisition and retention of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. It builds on the ban on the use of such weapons contained in the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The BTWC entered into force in 1975. No agreement has been reached on a verification regime to monitor compliance with the Convention. The BTWC has 155 states parties.

CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, STOCK- PILING AND USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION (CWC)

The CWC bans the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons. It entered into force in 1997. The CWC has 178 states parties. CWC parties are required to declare any chemical weapons-related activities, to secure and destroy any stockpiles of chemical weapons within stipulated deadlines, as well as to inactivate and eliminate any chemical- weapons production capacity within their jurisdiction. Six states parties have declared chemical weapons. The CWC is the first disarmament agreement to require the elimination of an entire

category of weapons of mass destruction under universally applied international control. Its operative functions are carried out by the OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons).

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

The abhorrence of the use of 'poison' as a weapon has deep roots in history. The 1899 Hague Declaration prohibited the use of projectiles whose sole object was 'the diffusion of asphyxiating and deleterious gases'. The 1907 Hague Convention IV prohibited the use of 'poison and poisoned weapons'. Nevertheless, gas – most often mustard gas – was used extensively in World War I. The public was horrified. As a result, the Geneva Protocol (Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare) was adopted in 1925.

THE MAIN TYPES OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS:

Nerve agent: highly lethal, kills in very small dosages. E.g. sarin, soman, VX.

Blistering agent: causes burns and blisters on the body, damages eyes. If inhaled it severely damages the lungs, which often leads to death. E.g. mustard sulphurous gas, lewisite.

Asphyxiating agent: causes damage to the lungs. E.g. phosgene, mustard gas.
Psychotomimetic agent: causes a hallucinatory effect similar in kind to that of LSD. E.g. BZ.

Incapacitating agent: relies on irritants and toxic effects to incapacitate a person temporarily. Depending on purpose of use they might be allowed under the CWC. E.g. tear gas, CS.

Possible new agents: research on new ways of affecting the human brain to cause aggressiveness, sleepiness, fear or other emotions. E.g. bioregulators.

After 12 years of negotiations, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was adopted by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on 3 September 1992. The CWC allows for the stringent verification of compliance by State Parties. The CWC opened for signature in Paris on 13 January 1993 and entered into force on 29 April 1997. The CWC is the first disarmament agreement negotiated within a multilateral framework that provides for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under universally applied international control. In order to prepare for the entry-into-force of the CWC, a Preparatory Commission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was established with the responsibility to prepare detailed operation procedures and to put into place the necessary infrastructure for the permanent implementing agency provided for in the Convention. Headquarters for this organization were established in The Hague, the Netherlands. The CWC entered into force on 29 April 1997, 180 days after deposit of the 65th instrument of ratification.

USE:

The use of harmful chemicals in warfare, personal attacks, and assassinations dates back centuries, but the rise of industrial production of chemicals in the late 19th century opened the door to more massive use of chemical agents in combat. The first major use of chemicals on the battlefield was in World War I when Germany released chlorine gas from pressurized cylinders in April 1915 at Ypres, Belgium. Ironically, this attack did not technically violate the 1899 Hague Peace Conference Declaration, the first international attempt to limit chemical agents in warfare, which banned only “the use of projectiles the sole object of which is the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases.” Historians estimate that, with the introduction of mustard gases in 1917, chemical weapons and agents injured some one million soldiers and killed 100,000 during the 1914-1918 war.

Most of the major powers in World War II developed, produced, and stockpiled large amounts of chemical weapons during the war. Since the end of the war in 1945, there have been only sporadic reports of limited use of chemical weapons, including in the Yemen war of 1963-1967 when Egypt bombed Yemeni villages, killing some 1,500 people.[6] The United States heavily used herbicides such as Agent Orange

and tear gas in the Vietnam War in the 1960s; although such chemicals are not covered under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), some observers saw this as chemical warfare. Iraq used chemical weapons in the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and against the Kurds in Halabja in 1988. These two cases provoked widespread public opposition to the horrors and indiscriminate nature of deadly chemical agents and certainly helped advance CWC negotiations, which had begun in the early 1980s, to their conclusion in 1992.

The use of the nerve agent sarin by the Japanese terrorist group Aum Shinrikyo in June 1994 in Matsumoto, Japan, and again on March 20, 1995, in the Tokyo subway system, killing 19 people and injuring some 5,000, suddenly brought to light the potential threat of nonstate actors intent on using weapons of mass destruction. The first official on-site inspection by the United States of a Russian chemical weapons stockpile in the Kurgan Oblast along the border of Kazakhstan in July 1994 illustrated that Russian chemical weapons arsenals left much to be desired regarding security against theft, diversion, and terrorism.

Iraqi insurgents in recent years have combined tanks of chlorine gas with improvised explosive devices, but with little success. There have been more recent reports of the possible limited use of chemical agents by Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan and by Turkish troops against Kurdish rebels in eastern Turkey, but these allegations remain unproven. In public statements, Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda have repeatedly threatened to use nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons.

In July 2012, the Syrian government publically acknowledged the existence of its chemical stockpile for the first time. Syria is believed to possess hundreds of tons of mustard gas, blister agents, and nerve agents, which could include sarin and the agent VX. Intelligence reports by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France assess that the Assad regime used chemical weapons against opposition forces on several occasions in 2013, including an attack in Damascus that killed over 1,400 people. The United Nations, in cooperation with the OPCW, is also investigating the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

On September 14, after two days of meetings, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov reached an agreement on a detailed plan for the accounting, inspection, control, and elimination of Syria's chemical weapons. The plan requires Syria to provide a full declaration of its stockpile "within

a week” and provide the OPCW and the UN access to all chemical weapons sites in Syria. The plan calls for the OPCW inspectors to complete their initial inspections by November and calls for the destruction of the stockpile of chemical weapons and chemical agents by the first half of 2014. The United States and Russia will now seek to secure approval of the plan by the OPCW executive council and then a UN Security Council resolution. The agreement outlined states that “in the event of non-compliance, including unauthorized transfer, or any use of chemical weapons by anyone in Syria, the UN Security Council should impose measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

WHO HAS CHEMICAL WEAPONS?

The Chemical Weapons Convention bans the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer, and use of chemical weapons and requires all possessor states to destroy their stockpiles safely. Article IV obligates each country to declare “all chemical weapons owned or possessed by a State Party, or that are located in any place under its jurisdiction or control” and to “destroy all chemical weapons.... Such destruction shall begin not later than two years after this Convention enters into force for it and shall finish not later than 10 years after entry into force of this Convention,” that is, by April 29, 2007. The treaty allows a deadline extension of up to five years from that date. The convention also requires round-the-clock, on-site inspection of all chemical weapons destruction operations and allows for challenge inspections of suspect activities. Seven countries declared chemical weapons stockpiles when they joined the CWC: Albania, India, Iraq, Libya, South Korea, the United States and Russia. Of those seven countries, Albania, South Korea, and India have completed destruction.

When Russia, the United States, and Libya declared that they would be unable to meet that deadline in 2012, CWC state parties agreed to extend the deadlines with increased reporting and transparency. Iraq’s chemical weapons are largely concentrated in debris in two bunkers bombed in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and their contents remain somewhat unknown.

Russia declared the largest stockpile with 40,000 metric tons at seven arsenals in six regions of Russia. The United States declared 28,577 metric tons at nine stockpiles in eight states and on Johnston Atoll west of Hawaii. Albania and Libya declared the smallest stockpiles, with 16 and 23 metric tons respectively. India and South Korea

declared stockpiles in the 2,000-metric-ton range, maintaining a high degree of secrecy around the size, location, and composition of their weapons.

According to U.S. intelligence assessments, two non-parties to the CWC, Syria and North Korea, were long-suspected of possessing chemical weapons programs and stockpiles of agents. Syria admitted that it had chemical weapons in July 2012 and joined the CWC on September 12, 2013, but it remains unclear if it will follow through on its obligations under the treaty to declare and begin dismantlement of its program.

THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

After some 20 years of negotiations, a complete ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons finally came into effect in 1997, when the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) entered into force.

There are 178 parties to the CWC as of April 2006. Containing extensive verification measures, the CWC requires states parties to declare and then to destroy all stocks of chemical weapons within 10 years of entry into force (by 2007), with a possible extension of up to five years (by 2012). Most importantly, the Convention completely prohibits their future development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use.

Unlike the NPT, which allows five states to retain nuclear weapons, all rules in the CWC are non-discriminatory. They apply equally to all its parties, whether they are great powers or small. Another important difference between the treaties is that, unlike the NPT, the CWC establishes well-defined authorities – a Conference of the States Parties, an Executive Council and a Technical Secretariat – to be responsible for the operation and implementation of the Convention.

The comprehensive prohibition of the acquisition, production and use of chemical weapons has been a success. However, a number of challenges remain. They are listed in one document and two plans of action that were adopted by the 2003 CWC Review Conference. The problems, which are addressed below, include:

A failure to meet CWC deadlines for destruction of chemical weapon stocks
Several states still have not joined the CWC

A continued interest among states in the development of non-lethal chemical weapons, such as incapacitants

Shortcomings in verification and inspection activities
Limited applicability to non-state actors (terrorists)
Uneven implementation among state parties.

DEFINITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (CWC ARTICLE II):

1. 'Chemical Weapons' means the following, together or separately:

(a) Toxic chemicals and their precursors, except where intended for purposes not prohibited under this Convention, as long as the types and quantities are consistent with such purposes;

(b) Munitions and devices, specifically designed to cause death or other harm through the toxic properties of those toxic chemicals specified in subparagraph (a), which would be released as a result of the employment of such munitions and devices;

(c) Any equipment specifically designed for use directly in connection with the employment of munitions and devices specified in subparagraph (b).

2. 'Toxic Chemical' means:

Any chemical, which through its chemical action on life processes can cause death, temporary incapacitation or permanent harm to humans or animals. This includes all such chemicals, regardless of their origin or of their method of production, and regardless of whether they are produced in facilities, in munitions or elsewhere.

WHICH CHEMICALS ARE CONTROLLED?

Schedule 1 chemicals include those that have been or can easily be used as chemical weapons and which have very limited, if any, uses for peaceful purposes. These chemicals are subject to very stringent restrictions, including ceilings on production (1 tonne per annum per state party) and possession, licensing requirements and restrictions on transfers. These restrictions apply to the relatively few industrial facilities that use such chemicals. Some of these chemicals are used as ingredients in pharmaceutical preparations or as diagnostics. Others are produced and used for protective purposes, such as for testing CW protective equipment and chemical agent alarms. Schedule 2 chemicals include those that are precursors to, or that in some cases can themselves be used as, chemical weapon agents, but which have a number of other commercial uses (such as ingredients in resins, flame-retardants, additives, inks and dyes, insecticides, herbicides, lubricants and some raw materials for pharmaceutical products).

Schedule 3 chemicals include those that can be used to produce, or can be used as, chemical weapons, but which are widely used for peaceful purposes (including plastics, resins, mining chemicals, petroleum refining fumigants, paints, coatings, anti-static agents and lubricants).

Discrete Organic Chemicals (DOCs) are among those chemicals not specifically listed in the Schedules or anywhere in the Convention. Manufacturing operations producing DOCs are referred to as 'other chemical production facilities'. These plant sites are subject to declarations and verification requirements if they produce in aggregate more than 200 tonnes of DOCs annually. They are also subject to these requirements if they comprise plants at which more than 30 tonnes of any DOCs containing the elements phosphorous, sulphur or fluorine (PSF chemicals) are produced. Thousands of plant sites have been declared to the OPCW.

BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS

Biological warfare and bioterrorism involve the deliberate cause or spread of disease by biological agents, used as a weapon. Such weapons have the potential to cause immense human harm, panic and societal disruption. Although governments have long understood that eliminating the threats posed by these weapons will require extensive international cooperation, the need for such cooperation is more urgent today than ever.

This urgency arises from several converging developments. One concerns the rapid evolution in the life sciences, with possibly unforeseen, dangerous consequences. Another is that the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention lacks a capacity for monitoring and verification, implementation and enforcement. An additional problem is that many governments have not adopted or fully implemented national legislation and other instruments to ensure fulfilment of their obligations. Yet another concern arises from the possible misuse or negative impact of biodefence programmes, such as their potential to provide cover for the illegal development or maintenance of biological weapons-related expertise. Furthermore, there is a heightened fear of the impact of terrorist actions, coupled with profound concern that

modern economies may be particularly vulnerable to disruption from the deliberate spread of disease.

The Commission recognizes that strengthening the prohibition embodied in the BTWC is a necessary, but not sufficient, requirement for dealing with these intractable, interrelated problems.

Biological weapons can be subdivided in several ways. One way is to consider the type of agent that causes disease, such as bacteria, viruses or toxins. Another is to look at the types of effects, such as a disease that can be transmitted between humans (contagious) or only affects those directly exposed to the biological agent. A third way is to look at symptoms – for example, some diseases might normally lead to death while others might incapacitate their victims or lead to changes in behaviour.

THE GENEVA PROTOCOL

Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating Gas, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare

Signed on 17 June 1925 and entered into force on 8 February 1928

Prohibits the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices

Prohibits the use of bacteriological methods of warfare

Commits the parties to exert every effort to induce other States to accede

The prohibitions 'shall be universally accepted as a part of International Law, binding alike the conscience and the practice of nations'.

THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION (BTWC)

It was signed in 1972 and entered into force in 1975. The BTWC bans the development, production, stockpiling and acquisition of bio- logical and toxin

weapons and requires the destruction or conversion of such weapons or delivery means. The Convention embodies the principle known as the general purpose criterion under which all relevant activities are prohibited unless they can be justified for the peaceful purposes permitted under the Convention, including justifications relating to types and quantities of materials being used for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.

The BTWC (as of April 2006) has 155 parties – fewer than either the NPT or the CWC. A further 16 states have signed but not ratified the Convention, while more than 20 states have neither signed nor ratified it (see Box 18). In order for the overall regime to be strengthened the parties need to promote universal adherence to the Convention.

The BTWC has no provision for the formal monitoring or verification of compliance or implementation. Unlike the CWC, there is no central institution or verification regime for the BTWC.

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE CONVENTION

The biological threat poses multifaceted challenges and requires multifaceted solutions. So far, however, there is scant agreement on how to move forward. Some states have abandoned any hope of strengthening international confidence in compliance. Some are still seeking to revive the idea of the verification protocol. Others now want to move on and build bridges between collective, treaty-based mechanisms and other approaches.

In the Commission's view, efforts to achieve some level of multilaterally agreed principles and powers should be pursued, although the complexities of the challenge make it necessary to counter biological-weapon threats from a variety of angles. The international community should focus simultaneously on the following types of activity, all of which contribute to the overall regime for control of the hostile uses of the life sciences.

strengthening and effective enforcement of international agreements, including monitoring and reporting
increasing public health awareness combined with enhanced health and safety regulations, measures and resources
controls on transfers of material and equipment
norm building among all those engaged in the life

sciences and in society as a whole public information counter-terrorism intelligence and tools.

NON-PARTIES TO THE BTWC

States that have signed but not yet ratified:

Burundi, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Guyana, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Somalia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Tanzania

Non-signatory states:

Andorra, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Cook Island, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Zambia

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning the development, production and stockpiling of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, was opened for signature on 10 April 1972. The BWC entered into force on 26 March 1975.

The Second Review Conference (1986) agreed that the States Parties were to implement a number of confidence-building measures (CBM) in order to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions and in order to improve international co-operation in the field of peaceful biological activities. The CBMs were expanded by the Third Review Conference (1991).

Under these agreements, the States Parties undertook to provide annual reports - using agreed forms - on specific activities related to the BWC including: data on research centres and laboratories; information on vaccine production facilities; information on national biological defence research and development programmes; declaration of past activities in offensive and/or defensive biological research and development programmes; information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins; publication of results and promotion of use of knowledge and contacts; information on legislation, regulations and other measures.