



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

First Review Conference
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JAPAN

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION REVIEW CONFERENCE: IMPLEMENTING THE CONVENTION

INDUSTRY ISSUES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The First Review Conference provides the States Parties with an excellent opportunity to review the past operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) and to discuss possible measures for future improvement.
- 1.2 Japan cites elements for improvement and makes proposals to the First Review Conference for its consideration regarding the operation of the Convention on industry issues.

2. Review

- 2.1 The industry verification regime has been implemented smoothly during the last five years and it has been widely accepted by States Parties as an effective measure for the prohibition of chemical weapons. Its past operation proves that this regime has been effectively preventing the conversion of toxic chemicals and their precursors into chemical weapons. Consequently it has substantially contributed to strengthening confidence among States Parties.
- 2.2 As an inspected State Party, Japan has built up extensive experience. Japan has declared 588 industry plant sites (as of 31 December 2002), amounting to 11.6% of the total number of plant sites declared to the OPCW. Of the plant sites declared by Japan, 90.1% are inspectable. Since entry into force of the Convention, 34 industry inspections were conducted in Japan; 26 inspections of Schedule 2 facilities, seven inspections of Schedule 3 facilities and one inspection of an Other Chemical Production Facility (DOC/PSF). Japan has received six sequential inspections of industry facilities, one of which was a sequential inspection of an industry facility and a Chemical Weapons Production Facility. All inspections were conclusive with respect to Japan’s compliance of its obligations under the Convention.



- 2.3 Based on our experiences, Japan attaches great importance to a balanced approach of industry verification. Without prejudice to the object and purpose of the Convention, which are to ban chemical weapons worldwide, possible burdens on the industry should be taken into account in a pragmatic manner. Japan believes that States Parties and the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) should make every possible effort to improve the industry verification regime with a view to achieving maximum results with minimum costs and increasing reliability of this verification regime as a confidence-building measure.

3. Future direction

- 3.1 Japan believes that it is important to include simple and positive words regarding the implementation of the Convention in the Political Declaration, and that these words should send a clear message to the public. Therefore, Japan has proposed inclusion of three elements, “effectiveness, transparency and fairness”, in the Political Declaration as follows:

“Effectiveness, transparency and fairness will remain important principles for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.”

- 3.2 With regard to future operation of the industry verification regime, Japan believes that the First Review Conference should guide States Parties to continue to study these aspects.

(a) Effectiveness

The human and financial resources of the OPCW are limited. Therefore, it is necessary to seek the utmost efficiency in the allocation and utilisation of these resources with regard to OPCW’s various activities. This is also required for implementation of the industry verification regime, since the facilities subject to verification are numerous and diverse in character.

Possible options are:

- Reducing inspection costs, for instance by reducing the number of inspectors and duration of inspections based on experience acquired by the Secretariat, or by conducting more sequential inspections while paying due consideration to the protection of confidential information of each enterprise;
- Simplifying declaration forms;
- Introducing electronic submission of declarations;

(b) Transparency

Japan believes that transparency in activities of the OPCW contributes to ensuring reliability of the industry verification regime. This regime should be implemented under clear rules and applied in a consistent, uniform and reasonable manner in accordance with the Convention.

The First Review Conference should encourage States Parties to establish further clear and reasonable rules such as:

- Procedures for information security audits of the confidentiality regime of the OPCW;
- Selection methodology of OCPF inspections;
- Procedures for the implementation of OCPF inspections;

(c) Fairness

Under the industry verification regime, States Parties as well as facilities, should be treated equally and with fairness:

- The operation of the verification regime is based on declarations. The burden on States Parties and their facilities should be equally distributed. Any delay of submission of declarations should be addressed, because it could cause an unbalanced implementation;
- One of the weighting factors for selection of plant sites for inspection is “the information on the listed plant sites available to the Technical Secretariat”. However, facilities should not be treated favourably or unfavourably for disclosing or not disclosing their information to the public. Therefore, the Secretariat should only be guided by declared information.

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