



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Second Review Conference
7 – 18 April 2008

RC-2/NAT.15
14 April 2008
ENGLISH only

FINLAND

**ANALYSIS OF BIOMEDICAL SAMPLES
UPON ALLEGATION OF USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

1. Biomedical sample analysis could be the only possibility to verify the alleged use of chemical weapons. Chemical weapons degrade rapidly after exposure and form biomarkers, i.e. metabolites, which can be analysed from biomedical samples. In practice, clear forensic evidence may be needed to fully clarify a situation of alleged use.
2. At present, capabilities to perform biomedical sample analysis are limited to very few among the laboratories designated by the Director-General for environmental analysis (report by the temporary working group on biomedical samples of the Scientific Advisory Board, The Hague, 5 – 6 February 2007). The OPCW Laboratory itself has no appropriate facilities or experience in undertaking biomedical sample analysis. The Director-General has welcomed the assistance of Member States in this area. Therefore, the promotion of research on this compelling technical issue at the national level should be a priority for Member States of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”).
3. Finland finds it important that the Second Review Conference encourage the development of the capabilities of the OPCW for analysis of biomedical samples. The development of methods for such analysis is of importance equally as an issue of verification of the Convention and as a possible form of assistance and protection under the Convention.
4. A practical way forward could be for the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW to organise confidence-building exercises in this field. The initiation of a series of exercises, with the long-term goal of a system of laboratories seeking designation for analysis of biomedical samples, would be feasible. Reference chemicals are needed for developing and validating methods, as well as for exercises. The detailed methods for the synthesis of the respective metabolites and commercial sources could best be provided to the OPCW through the chairman of the temporary working group on biomedical samples of the Scientific Advisory Board.

--- 0 ---

