

XXVII

TECMUN Jr.

Organisation for the
Prohibition of Chemical
Weapons

“The world will be saved and remade by the dreamers.”

Sarah J. Maas

Dear Delegates,

It has been a year since the very first time I dared to actively participate of a United Nations Model. When I first heard of TECMUN it was by chance, but what prompted me to cross the door and then join a committee was the feeling of for once having the possibility to make a real change. Glancing at how I used to see international situations back then and how I see them today, I now understand that while we might live in a world fed of problems, there will always be someone willing to step up and fight for justice. TECMUN gave me the opportunity to rise up my voice, to not be afraid; to have dreams and be brave enough to watch them come true. And now, delegates, it's your turn.

During three days of debate, you will have the opportunity to analyze a problem that today's world is facing and reach a viable solution after having heard multiple perspectives. We live surrounded by people whose ideologies greatly differ from ours, and the clash of opinions make it hard to understand each other. However, by the end of this experience I'm convinced you will have a new overview of the world, and the skills you are going to develop will not only stay in here. You will rise up your voice, you will speak your mind with solid arguments, you will make others hear and, eventually, together, you will change the world. Today you are representing a delegation's point of view, but tomorrow you will speak your own. Do not be afraid, be bold and fight the straight box we live in. Question injustices; ask the who, the what, and the why. And delegate, always keep dreaming. Dream as high as you can imagine; and off you go to create a big, wonderful future.

Marisol Stephanía Ramírez Herrera

President of the Organisation of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

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Background of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was created in 1997 as the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the world's first international disarmament agreement that marked the end of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and Preparatory Commission. The OPCW is an intergovernmental organization with established headquarters in the city of The Hague in the Netherlands, and 193 Member States. The Organisation aims the effective and permanent eradication of chemical weapons; the provision of protection and assistance against chemical threats; the encouragement of international cooperation for a peaceful approach of chemistry; international security; and global economic development. To ensure this vision, the OPCW has the power to consider any question or issue, and make recommendations regarding the Convention; shall conduct verification labors in time and effectively; can request for precise information in order to fulfill the given responsibility; shall protect the confidentiality of civil and military data; and is obligated to pursue the outright performance of the Convention. All within the legitimate protection of national security and proprietary interests, alongside the principles of integrity, professionalism, and diversity.

Topic A

Measures to prevent the use of neurotoxic weapons from organic compounds, focusing on the threat the nerve agents represent in a chemical attack

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Introduction

During the last decade, the vision regarding the use of chemical weapons and its potential consequences has changed in respect with the end of the 20th century, when the main concern was the usage of specialized munitions to sabotage the international security. Agents like mustard gas, chlorine, and hydrogen cyanide had been used against civilians for political and extremist purposes on multiple occasions before, and henceforth, they are banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Nonetheless, with the arrival of new technology, the development and production of chemical weapons, designed specifically to skirt the parameters established by the Convention, became one of the new and greatest threats the 21st century has to endure. Among these weapons, the neurotoxins represent a major concern due to the high lethality and harmful effects they have on the human body. They are made up of organophosphorus compounds (OP), which act by disrupting the nerve signals controlling the muscular system. The agent blocks the enzyme in charge of muscle contraction, causing lung narrowing, spasms, involuntary bowel movements, and mouth foaming.

On 2018, a former Soviet spy and his daughter were targeted with a neurotoxic weapon, later identified as Novichok. The nerve agent was confirmed to be a binary weapon, ten times more dangerous than sarin or VX—a synthetic phosphonic acid—, made by organophosphorus compounds. The reason this chemical agent was able to remain unnoticed by authorities is that the materials used to develop the weapon remain legal under the CWC. If more neurotoxins made up from organic compounds were to be designed now, they could be developed in secret and later used against specific sectors of the population in a chemical attack, without previous awareness of the OPCW.

Neurotoxic weapons

Also known as nerve agents, these weapons are synthetic substances that alter the structure and well functioning of the nervous system, causing damage, permanent destruction or impairing in the central nervous system (CNS) and the peripheral nervous system (PNS). The chemical agents can be absorbed through inhalation, ingestion, skin contact, and injections. Though the consequences may vary from immediate to long-lasting effects, neurotoxins

cause direct damage in the neurons, axons, and glia, which can conclude in the loss of various nuclei and axons tracts associated with demyelination,

The warfare nerve agents, such as Novichok, sarin, and VX, are OP compounds that have been developed due to their high mass destruction possibility index. These agents were originally manufactured during the Second World War (WWII) as poisons to be used in chemical attacks, but after 1950, they emerged as the most effective pesticide controls. The chemical structure of an OP consists of oxygen, phosphorus, carbon, and the attachment of sulfur or nitrogen, synthesized mainly for agrochemical purposes. Poisoning involves the addition of a phosphate (PO_3) to an enzyme called acetylcholinesterase (AChE), leading to the appease of neurotransmissions. The inhibition of the enzyme causes the excessive accumulation of a neurotransmitter known as acetylcholine (ACh), producing overstimulation at the AChE receptors known as a cholinergic system, and therefore nerves, through the CNS and PNS.

Organophosphorus compounds are widely used in the agriculture industry, focusing on the benefits through the manufacturing of pesticides and insecticides. Today, about three dozen safe pesticides are available in the market worldwide; nonetheless, compounds belonging to agrochemistry products still have great amounts of acetylcholinesterase inhibitors. Thus, the slightest contact with an OP can cause fatal consequences. Death can be caused by the paralysis of the diaphragm and the intercostal muscles, ending up in respiratory failure. It can also be caused by the bleakness of the brain, respiratory system, bronchospasm, and excessive bronchial secretions (Milatović, D, 2009). In rural regions of Africa and Asia, self-pesticide-poisoning is both, a major clinical and health problem. It is estimated that from 500,000 deaths from self-harm, 60 percent out of the total are due to pesticide poisoning, and two-thirds, approximately, are from organophosphorus pesticides. The numbers are higher in regions where highly toxic pesticides, belonging to the World Health Organization (WHO) Class I Toxicity, are available.

The WHO classification toxicity is based on the determination of lethal dose 50 (LD50) in an agent. The LD50 is the standard degree for the toxicity of a material that once exposed to, liquidate half of the sample population in a specific period of time. It is measured in milligrams of the material per kilogram of the tested animal's weight. Class 1A stands for

extremely hazardous, Class IB for highly hazardous, Class II moderately hazardous, and Class III for slightly hazardous.

Nerve agents in chemical warfare

The use of different techniques involving chemical weapons, such as poisoned arrows and arsenic smokes, can be traced back to the first civilizations, thousands of years ago. Hence, the banning of chemical agents as part of the main issues to solve in the initial disarmament agreements (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 2013). The term chemical warfare refers to the use of chemical components, categorically developed into toxins, for the purpose of taking lives or harming the enemy in hopes of gaining a military or political advantage. They differ from conventional Belic weaponry, as chemical agents do not possess an explosive detonation and, instead, act by inhibiting the human nervous system.

In 1675, the first international treaty regarding the use of chemical agents was signed by the Kingdom of Germany (now the Federal Republic of Germany) and the Kingdom of France (now the French Republic), prohibiting the use of poisoned bullets. Two more followed, one in 1874, to restrict the employment of chemical agents and their use to cause suffering, yet it never entered in force; and the second one, in 1899, established by the contracting parties of the Hague Convention. Despite the measures taken to address the problem, the First World War (WWI) served as the stage for the first massive chemical attack, on April 22, 1915, in the Kingdom of Belgium. Though chlorine and mustard gases do not fall in the category of nerve agents, it is estimated that it caused the death of 90,000 soldiers due to immediate exposure and more than a million victims with permanent disabilities.

Moreover, the worldwide conflict prompted the advent of new chemical agents, which were improved by military scientists and engineers. In the time between the end of the WWI and the beginning of WWII, European countries invested considerable amounts of capital in the development of chemical agents. They were used by nations like the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the Italian Republic, and the Federal Republic of Germany, among others. The discoveries renewed the interest in the chemical field, and chemical warfare was anticipated in the coming up armed conflict; nonetheless, chemical agents were not used during WWII. Instead, during the Cold War, the United States of America and the

USSR came to keep enormous stockpiles of thousand tons of neurotoxins. Said agents were used later in proxy wars and ended with catastrophic consequences for the countries involved.

The Salisbury incident

On March 4, 2018, former Soviet spy, Sergei Skripal, and his 33-year-old daughter were targeted with a nerve agent, later found to be Novichok, in the city of Salisbury, in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Mr. Skripal and his daughter were found unconscious on a bench in a very critical condition and were taken immediately to the hospital by emergency services. Following the attack, two officers near the incident were treated for itchy eyes and wheezing, while Detective Sergeant Nick Bailey, who was sent back to Mr. Skripal's house, was hospitalized hours later. The investigation was lead by the Counter Terrorism Command and the Metropolitan Police. Samples of the nerve agent were taken by the Defense Science and Technology Laboratory in Porton Down. However, results tested positive for a very rare and unidentified substance. On March 12, Prime Minister Theresa May confirmed the usage of an agent identified as Novichok, an extremely compelling fourth-generation chemical weapon, developed by the Soviet Union between the decades of 1970 and 1980. One month later, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons verified the analysis made by the United Kingdom and confirmed the use of Novichok in the attempted murder of Mr. and Miss Skripal.

A few days after the incident, political pressure began to arise on Theresa May. The perpetrators had neither been found nor punished, and politicians suspected the attack had been planned by the Russian government. The Prime Minister demanded President Vladimir Putin's administration an explanation on how a Soviet chemical agent was used in Salisbury. The Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergey Lavrov, denied any Russian involvement in the Skripal's poisoning, and instead accused the United Kingdom (UK) of spreading propaganda as Vladimir Putin was running for his fourth presidential election and Russia was to be the host of the 2018 FIFA World Cup. On March 14, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) called for an urgent meeting to discuss the incident. The UK accused the Russian Federation of breaking the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the United States of America expressed its full agreement on attributing the blame of the attack to Russia, as well as

punitive measures. The United Kingdom and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) appealed for a full disclosure of the Novichok program; Russia agreed to give the OPCW a sample of the nerve agent as soon as the criminal investigation permitted it. It was concluded that the neurotoxin was manufactured in a small chemical facility, located in the town of Shikhany in Russia. Novichok was added to the list of banned chemicals of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Novichok

Throughout the decades of 1970, 1980 and till the beginning of 1990, the USSR worked on the development of a great diversity of highly harmful toxic agents. Program *Foliant*, conducted by the State Institute of Scientific Research of Chemistry and Organic Technology, was one of the many sets of experiments carried out by the Soviets as a response to the enormous amount of manufactured chemical weapons worldwide. The nerve agent known as Novichok turned to exceed all expectations due to its lethality and simple chemical composition

Novichok is the name given to a series of nerve agents produced secretly by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The neurotoxins are organophosphorus binary weapons, meaning the handling and transmission of the munitions are really simple as the precursor is less hazardous than the agent itself. Moreover, the precursor is easier to stabilize, and though the careless preparation presents the risk of creating a non-optimal agent, the chances of extending the shelf life of the weapon are longer. The Novichok was created specifically to be undetectable based on the NATO standard of the 80s, and to circumvent the list of controlled and non-banned chemicals of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Nonetheless, the descriptions provided by Russian scientists and ex-spies, through espionage reports, are not enough to fully understand the composition of the toxin.

Though the chemical structure of Novichok is not clear, the neurotoxin still works like any other nerve agent. The organophosphorus compound functions as an inhibitor, preventing the brain from sending neurotransmissions to the rest of the body. Novichok can enter the body via ingestion, inhalation or through the skin. The agent causes the blockade of the chlorine system, in charge of the transmission signals between the brain and the muscle

tissue. The acetylcholinesterase enzyme (ACh) begins to eliminate the orders to contract and relax the muscles, causing involuntary spasms all along the body. As the agent advances through the system, it sends all the muscles to spasm and into constant overdrive. Light exposure produces headaches, cognitive difficulty, and problems with coordination. However, exposure to great doses of Novichok triggers a total paralysis in the organism, causing uncontrolled secretions from the lungs and mouth, diarrhea, sweating, vomiting, delusions, and heart racing. The general weakness and paralyzation of the body can progress into suffocation and further death.

Interest in the manufacturing and use of organophosphorus weapons

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has classified the nerve agents into two main groups. The first one, called G-series agents, persists in the environment for a usually short period of time. They include tabun (GA), sarin (GB), soman (GD), and cyclosarin (GF). The second group, known as the V-series agents, are extremely lethal and its stronger structure allows them to remain in the environment for a fairly amount of time. They comprehend the XV agent—used to poison Kim Jong-Nam in Malaysia—, VG, and VR. Though their chemical and physical characteristics do not coincide, both G and V-series agents are highly toxic synthetic chemicals and represent a threat to international security.

Among the main concerns regarding the manufacturing of a new era of chemical weapons, the approach radical groups may have in relation to the design of organophosphate agents stands out. Different extremist organizations, principally in the regions of the Middle East and Northern Africa, have shown interest in the use of neurotoxins to cause panic and further its own cause. However, radicals who might possess banned chemical weapons are not parties of the CWC, and therefore, their usage cannot be contained. Even though humanitarian law recognizes the armed conflict between government forces and non-governmental armed groups, the availability of the chemical industry and the lack of compliance by non-state actors mean the risk is growing.

Likewise, the outgoing Civil War in the Syrian Arab Republic presents a major concern. Since 2012, the Syrian government has deployed a series of different nerve agents and other chemical weapons to fight rebel groups. However, the use of neurotoxic agents has

gone beyond the established chemical warfare, and on August 2013, a massive attack involving the use of sarin gas caused the death of more than 14, 000 civilians. Syria is part of the 193 Member States of the OPCW, hence, it is obligated to fulfill the activities determined by the CWC. Nonetheless, the existence of a chemical weapon that eludes the list of banned materials opens the door to a new path of investigation. Although the results of said research are uncertain, the possibility of a new alloy is highly conceivable. So is the recurrence in the use of chemical agents in the Syrian Civil War.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one of the six countries who have not signed the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Withal having signed the Geneva Protocol, North Korea pledged to avoid the use of any kind of chemical agent in warfare. However, it does stop the country from manufacturing nor possessing neurotoxins. Between 2012 and 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic became the most affordable costume for North Korea in the buying of chemical weapons, due to its Civil War. Countries in Africa and the Middle East, including Myanmar, were also frequent customers of the raw material North Korea offered.

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Glossary

A

Acetylcholinesterase: An enzyme that serves to stop excitation of a nerve after transmission of an impulse.

Advent: The arrival of a person, thing, or event.

Alloy: A metal made by combining two or more metallic elements.

B

Binary weapon: A chemical weapon consisting of a projectile containing two substances separately that mix to produce a lethal agent when fired.

Bleakness: The quality or state of being bare and inhospitable.

Bowel: Tubes in the human body through which digested food passes down the stomach.

C

Cholinergic system: The neurotransmitter system involved in the regulation of memory and learning.

D

Demyelination: Any condition that results in damage to the protective covering of the brain's nerve fibers, optic nerves, and spinal cord.

Deploy: Move into position for military action.

F

Foam: A mass of small bubbles formed from saliva or sweat.

N

Narrowing: The act of becoming or making less wide.

P

Proxy wars: A war instigated by a major power which does not itself become involved.

Topic B

The renewal of the Chemical Weapons Convention, focusing on measures for the post-disarmament era

By: Marisol StepHANÍA Ramírez Herrera

Introduction

In November 2018, the Fourth Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention took place. The previous Review Conferences were concluded with consensus papers, gradually increasing the percentage of eradicated chemical weapons. To date, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has verified the correct destruction of 96% of the total chemical munitions worldwide. The Organisation was based in previous chemical programs from the Cold War; however, recent events involving the usage of chemical agents in the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Malaysia, have risen question for the future of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The attacks were investigated by the OPCW, and results confirmed the use of sarin, chlorine and sulfur mustard, as well as Novichok –a nerve agent never employed before. The Review Conference let in clear that there must be a strong reaffirmation regarding the norms and validations of the CWC. Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has stated that: “while disarmament is an aim the OPCW still has to successfully achieve, the non-proliferation of chemical weapons would not lend itself to simple solutions” (Arias, 2018). There must be an overview to the actual parameters established by the Convention and a renewal respecting what would be done to ensure the non-resurgence of chemical weapons, as well as actions to take against the threat of chemical radicalism. The development, production, and use of new chemical weapons represent a menace to international security and peace.

Chemical Weapons

A chemical weapon (CW) is defined as a toxic agent, designed specifically to injure, incapacitate or deprive of life. A common misconception of a toxic chemical involves the delivery systems in either bombs or artillery shells; however, the OPCW considers as chemical weapons all agents and their precursors when used outside the purposes and quantities permitted by the CWC. To help the full understanding of what chemical weapons are, its definition has been divided into three parts: toxic chemical and their precursors (any toxin used to harm humans or animals), munitions and devices (regarding the designs in hopes of provoking harm), and equipment directly connected to munitions (any material attached to the use and manufacturing of chemical weapons). However, under the Principle of

Consistency, any State party can develop, stockpile, and use certain chemical precursors legally.

According to the CWC, there are five types of chemical agents. Whether being in a gaseous, liquid or solid-state, their usage can cause a direct effect on the human body, carrying symptoms that include the alteration of neuromuscular functions, abnormal encephalograms, and impaired psychomotor functions. The first classification refers to choking agents (chlorine, chloropicrin, diphosgene), that act by inflicting injury mainly on the respiratory tract and irritating the nose, throat, and lungs. The blister agents (sulfur mustard, nitrogen mustard, lewisite) are oily substances that act via inhalation, first as an irritator and then as cell poison, producing severe burns. Blood agents (hydrogen cyanide, cyanogen chloride, arsine) inhibit the ability of blood units to transport and use oxygen, effectively, causing suffocation. Nerve agents (tabun, sarin, Novichok) block the impulses between the neuron's motor, causing the body to enter into synapses and rapid highly toxic effects. The last classification includes the riot control agents (tear gas, pepper spray), intended to temporarily incapacitate a person. This last type of agents is considered chemical weapons when used by a State as a method of warfare.

The Chemical Weapons Convention

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, also known as the Chemical Weapons Convention, is a multilateral treaty that aims the banning in the use of chemical agents and requires their eradication in a specific amount of time. To do so, it forbids the designing, manufacturing, acquisition, retention, transfer, and management of any chemical weapon by States Parties. Therefore, each country shall take the steps it considers necessary to correctly fulfill these objectives, always with respect to its own laws and jurisdiction. The accord is administered by an implemented organ, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which is responsible for receiving the States Parties' declaration on chemical agents activities, related materials, and relevant industrial actions. The CWC is composed by a Preamble, 24 articles, and three Annexes: the Annex on Chemicals, the Verification Annex, and the Confidentiality Annex.

The Chemical Weapons Convention negotiations began in 1980, in the United Nations Conference on Disarmament (UNCD), previously called the Disarmament Committee. The idea of banning the use of chemical agents had been around since the beginning of the 1970s, but it was not until 1992 that the UNCD was able to submit to the General Assembly the annual report, which contained the text for the Convention. The treaty was approved in November of the same year and the CWC remained opened until 1997 when it entered in force. Even though there had been a document regarding chemical weapons -the Geneva Protocol of 1925-, it only focused on the use of toxic agents in warfare, leaving aside the production and possession of them. The Chemical Weapons Convention, however, focused on both.

Moreover, the CWC penalizes the assisting, encouraging, or inducing of other states to engage in CWC-prohibited activity and the use of riot control agents for chemical operations purposes. Likewise, among the key elements under the Convention are: the prohibition of production and use of chemical weapons; the destruction, or monitored conversion to other functions, of chemical weapons production facilities; the destruction of all chemical agents, including those abandoned outside the State Party's territory; assistance between State Parties and the OPCW in alleged cases of use of chemical weapons; constant OPCW inspection regime for the production of chemicals which might be converted to chemical weapons; and international cooperation in the peaceful use of chemistry in relevant areas.

Actual measures established in the Convention

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, alongside the support of Member States, is committed to carrying out measures that certify the complete eradication of chemical weapons in today's arsenal. As the first step to ensure said vision, State Parties are obliged to submit declarations on their existing synthesized agents, chemicals, materials and functioning facilities that could be used in the manufacturing of synthetic agents for warfare. Declarations must include the quantity developed for each chemical, their classification in accordance with the parameters enacted by the CWC and the location of all chemical

weapons' storages. No longer after 30 days of the entry in force of the Convention, each State Party is as well asked to acknowledge their related declarations. These must include details regarding production facilities, chemical research and development, old chemical weapons (OCW), and status of the abandoned chemical weapons (ACW). The information is passed to the Declaration Branch, where is processed and analyzed to be validated.

A State Party can choose to implement whichever destruction technologies it considers appropriate. To do so, each Member is allowed to submit an execution plan in the declarations that match the frame stipulated by the Convention and the Executive Council Decisions. The execution plan must contain a list of types and quantities of the chemical weapons to be destroyed, methods of destruction and the appropriate facilities, cost estimates, and any issue that may outcome in an adverse impact of the internal destruction program. The Convention additionally requires State Parties to prioritize the safety of people and of the environment, as both are equal parts of their responsibilities. The technology used shall comply with national and international security, as well as air emissions regulations. Points concerning the required data are specified in Parts IV and V of the Verification Annex, giving further information in respect of the details needed for the destruction plans and reports.

All the destruction activities addressed by any Member State are supervised closely by the OPCW. The aim of verifications is to corroborate the complete destruction of synthetic agents, providing the State Parties with confidence that procedures are done in a whole and ensuring the non-diversion of chemical weapons or any other related material. The Technical Secretariat designates a major group of experts in chemical disarmament, who are responsible for enumerating the remaining stockpiles, and thus surveying the processes of decimation. In accordance with facility acquisition and previously agreed on plans of verification, the inspectors have unimpeded access to all zones in chemical weapons storage and destruction facilities. Investigators provide a constant physical presence at the location where chemical weapons are being destroyed, monitoring progress through processed advisory screens. They are also in charge of reviewing the documentation and records that may result relevant to their inspection. Until there is no certainty in the point of synthetic agent's extermination confirmed by inspectors, the OPCW is allowed to carry out demilitarization activities. However, no longer than 30 days after activities have been completed, the State Party

certifies that all chemical weapons have been successfully destroyed. In return, the Technical Secretariat confirms the Member's declaration (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 2019).

Measures to Prevent Resurgence

The resurgence of chemical weapons has been one of the main concerns during the last years. Synthetic agents may be produced by repurposing old chemical facilities, or be designed and manufactured in a smaller scale in laboratories under what appear to be peaceful chemistry purposes, what happened to be the case of Novichok—a Russian nerve agent based on the pesticide's formula—. Whether it is due through state-sponsored programs, extremism, or the action of lone individuals, the Chemical Weapons Convention is obliged to enhance the set of binding obligations on State Parties and verification regimes done by the Technical Secretariat. State Parties must ensure that all chemical agents and their precursors are uniquely employed for permitted purposes. Verifications, however, are a very broad responsibility that has lately proved to not be fully trustworthy. Toxic chemicals can be utilized for many legitimate and peaceful purposes, but they can also be used for an agenda prohibited by the Convention. The development of new dual-use synthesized agents enhances the act of chemical radicalism and jeopardizes global security, deliberately increasing the chances of hazardous exposure. Equipment in facilities can be compromised too if reactivated to produce chemical weapons and/or its precursors without notification to the OPWC.

State Parties are compelled to the Convention when importing or exporting chemical-related materials. Concerning international trading affairs, the CWC focuses on the transfers made between belonging members, and the ones made with non-State Parties. Disposals regarding synthetic agents in Schedule 1 and 2 are only permitted among the Member States. Schedule 3 chemicals can be transferred to not belonging States, only if the beneficiary hands over an end-use certificate, and pledges to not further displacement. All trade activities involving scheduled chemicals must be included in the declarations provided to the Technical Secretariat. However, in 2018 it was stated that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was exporting raw materials for manufacturing of chemical weapons to the Syrian Arab Republic, and those transactions were not reported. Under the Article IX of the Convention, any State Party is allowed to request the Secretariat to conduct an on-site inspection

challenge anywhere in the territory (or under the jurisdiction) of another Member-State. Challenge inspections are designed specifically to clear out and resolve any issue concerning suspected infringement, or alleged use of chemical agents for warfare. No State Party can refuse, regardless of the descriptions and features of where the inspection will take place. This type of actions works under the “any time, any place” methodology, meaning they can be launched in a very short period and can be directed to either declared or undeclared facilities or locations (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 2019).

The Role of the Convention in Chemical Extremism

The access and use that radical groups may have and give to chemical weapons is a significant global challenge. Non-State actors directly represent a threat to the Chemical Weapons Convention as they are not attached to the treaty (nor any other) and thus have no obligation to compel with the points addressed by it. The OPCW has openly recognized that the full and effective implementation of the Convention is itself a major contribution to counter-terrorism measures. While it was not specifically designed to deal with extremism, the number of provisions contained may help countries to control the access to toxic chemicals, as well as the recommended actions to adopt in case of a chemical attack. The Convention requires State Parties to adopt the conditions established for verification regimes regarding toxic agents and its precursors. However, it also involves the institution of controls for non scheduled and scheduled materials if the situation demands so. The OPCW has a range of capacity when it comes to building programs that help Member States combat radicalism acts. The key to preventing incendiaries from having access to synthetic agents is ensuring the chemical they seek cannot easily be found. Likewise, the Convention facilitates interaction between the Member States, including information exchange processes and equipment lending in case of a chemical attack. The Technical Secretary is mandated to provide aid and advice in any scenario, as well as the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission (RRAM). Appropriate measures must include policies that ensure security through the limitation in the existing risk of diversion for vulnerable chemicals. Dealing with chemical extremism also includes legal accountability. State Parties must ensure that those who plan and carry out attacks with toxic agents are brought to justice.

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Glossary

A

Allege: Claim or assert that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically without proof.

C

Choking: The act of causing severe difficulty in breathing because of a constricted or obstructed throat or a lack of air.

D

Decimation: The killing or destruction of a large proportion of a group or species.

Dual-use: Technology designed or suitable for both civilian and military purposes.

E

Encephalogram: An image, trace, or another record of the structure or electrical the activity of the brain.

Enhance: Intensify, increase, or further improve the quality, value, or extent of something.

M

Menace: A person or thing that is likely to cause harm.

S

Stockpile: A large accumulation of goods or materials, especially one held in reserve for use at a time of shortage or other emergencies.

Surveying: Look carefully and thoroughly at someone or something, especially so as to appraise them.

Synapse: A junction between two nerve cells, consisting of a minute gap across which impulses pass by diffusion of a neurotransmitter.

W

Warfare: Engagement in or the activities involved in war or conflict.