Introduction

The completion of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993 was meant to end the threat of chemical weapons attacks, by outlawing even possession of chemical weapons.1 A milestone in international law and disarmament, the treaty is almost universally accepted and led to destruction of the world’s largest chemical arsenals, including those of Libya and Russia.

But chemical weapons threats have not disappeared. Residual capabilities still exist in some countries, such as the United States. Chemical weapons have been sued in Syria, and other countries like North Korea are widely suspected of maintaining significant chemical weapons arsenals. The ease of production, moreover, makes it relatively easy for countries where arsenals have been eliminated—as they were in Syria in 2014—to acquire new stockpiles.

During the Syrian civil war (2011 – present), many of the most horrifying moments involved use of chemical weapons. While the most deadly attacks such as those on the Damascus suburb of Ghouta in 2013 and Khan Shaykhun in April 2017, a brought international condemnation, here have been many other reports of chemical weapons attack.

The international community faces growing pressure to enforce the Chemical Weapons Convention and eliminate residual chemical weapons threats. Countries that eliminated their chemical arsenals are especially adamant.2 Bringing countries that have not signed the CWC into the treaty is a major problem. The threat of chemical weapon use is a danger to any state of the world. Chemical weapons give states the power to destroy livestock, crops, and kill civilians indiscriminately. Use of and waste from the production of these weapons is likely to be just as dangerous and pollutes the surrounding water, air, and land.

But chemical weapons issues involve major controversies. What are a chemical weapons? Do they include non-lethal riot control weapons such as CS riot control gas? The CWC says yes, those are forbidden chemical weapons. Under the treaty, countries cannot use them in war, although may—led by the United States—preserve the right to use them for domestic law enforcement.

1 Chemical Weapons Convention, https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/

Broadening and enforcing sanctions for countries with chemical weapons capabilities

A similar problem surrounds chemical herbicides. During the Vietnamese war, a herbicide called Agent Orange that was sprayed to destroy plant life is still affecting the Vietnamese people and the US soldiers who were exposed to it. Two and three generations after the war, conditions similar to leprosy mixed with third degree burns and birth defects are common for those exposed to and effected by the chemical.3

Background

Historically, chemical weapons had their grand premier in the early twentieth century, though prior to WWI, many alternative forms had been used. Anything from poisoned arrows, arsenic, and carbon monoxide from historical bouts and defenses is considered chemical warfare. But chemical war does not include biological weapons, like intentional spreading of the bubonic plague or other bacterial and virus—based weapons. Those are regulated through a separate system of treaties.4

Large scale use of chemical weapons began in World War One, starting with attacks launched by Germany in 1915, later used by all sides, killing a total of some 100,000 soldiers and injuries hundreds of thousands more with mustard (an oily liquid), chlorine gas, and other choking or burning agents. The experience of World War One led, in 1925, to the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, or Geneva Protocol, commonly known as the Geneva Protocol.5 This did not bad possession, but banned first use of chemical weapons. This became the foundation to any future sanctions and war crime cases.

The Protocol remains in force, although it was largely superseded by the 1993 CWC. The Protocol has several gray areas and weaknesses, allowing for bending of the rules or skirting around them. There were no major battlefield attacks with chemical weapons in World War Two, but there were other uses of chemical killing. The Nazi German use of gas during the Holocaust revealed a shortcoming in the Protocol, as only the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons on the battlefield was prohibited. Therefore, there was no specific clause stating that using chemical or bacteriological weapons against a country’s own people was a breach of the agreement.

Another weakness was the Geneva Protocol only protected the states that agreed to it, thus any non-signatory country could attacked with chemical weapons, even from the signing states. This was accepted because the signing states claimed they would not use chemical or


bacteriological weapons unless the weapons were used against it by another state first.6

Depending on domestic law, non-state groups also were vulnerable attack. The Protocol only prohibited battlefield use of the weapons, but had no rules against producing, selling, or stockpiling such weapons.7

Disagreements over the agreement continued to break out over the course of the next 70 years. The Democratic Republic of (North) Korea claimed that the United States used chemical weapons in the Korean war of 1950-53. Major allegations of chemical weapons attack were directed against Egypt during its war in Yemen in the mid-1960s.

The United States once again drew attention with use of tear gas and Agent Orange, among others, in Vietnam. The United States claimed there was no wrongdoing, as the Protocol had nothing against herbicides or non-lethal gases.

The largest chemical attack after World War One happened in Iraq in 1988, when the Air Force of Saddam Hussein attacked the Kurdish town of Halabja, spraying Sarin nerve agent, killing an estimate 3,000 to 5,000, all civilians.

Partially in response to Halabja, and the easier political environment after the Cold War, these weaknesses were largely resolved under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Completed in 1993, it “aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties. States Parties, in turn, must take the steps necessary to enforce that prohibition in respect of persons (natural or legal) within their jurisdiction.”8 Many states currently refer to the CWC as means of deciding if another state’s actions are legitimate and in accordance with international policy.

Unlike the 1925 Protocol, the CWC bans most possession as well as all use of chemical weapons. It is monitored by a specially created organization, the OPCW. But enforcement I left up to the States Parties and the UN Security Council.

Chemical weapons precursors (manufacturing stocks) awaiting destruction in Libya in 2016.

**Current situation**

Over the course of the last eight years, the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs, or UNODA requested the Secretary General conduct a voluntary survey of anti-terrorism measures in each member state, as well as international organizations, along with the ideas each state had.9 It appears that only about sixty-one states and organizations replied, but it allowed for a good sample survey of the states {for further reading on exact policies per participating state and organization.

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6 “Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (Geneva Protocol).” U.S. Department of State.


8 Barbara Starr and Jeremy Diamond. “Trump launches military strike against Syria.” CNN.

In August 2013 United Nations investigators found sufficient evidence to suggest Bashar al-Assad’s Syrian Armed Forces were responsible for the Ghouta chemical attack, in which sarin gas was used to kill hundreds of civilians. While universally condemned, little could be done because Syria is not a signatory of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and, furthermore, the Geneva Protocol prohibiting chemical weapons in warfare—to which Syria is a signatory—only applies to interstate conflicts. The most recent major use of chemical weapons was that of Syria and the Assad regime bombing Syrian citizens with sarin on April 4, 2017.10 Sarin is a nerve agent, providing for a very slow and painful death. The blame was tossed around from Assad, to terror groups, and groups attempting to frame the Assad regime. But the US fears that Assad is once again preparing for a chemical attack, though Syria claims to have none.11

Role of the United Nations

The Secretary-General’s Mechanism to carry out prompt investigations in response to allegations brought to his attention concerning the possible use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons was developed in the late 1980s. Triggered by a request from any Member State, the Secretary-General is authorized to launch an investigation including dispatching a fact-finding team to the site(s) of the alleged incident(s) and to report to all United Nation Member States. This is to ascertain in an objective and scientific manner facts of alleged violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which bans the use of chemical and biological weapons, or other relevant rules of customary international law. The roster of experts and laboratories provided by Member States and the Guidelines and Procedures for the conduct of investigations constitute the key elements of the Mechanism. Member States encouraged the Secretary-General in September 2006 to update the roster of experts and laboratories, as well as the technical guidelines and procedures, available to him for the timely and efficient investigation of alleged use.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs has been working with Member States to update the roster of experts and laboratories and the technical appendices of the guidelines and procedures so that they fully correspond with the rapid and substantial developments that have occurred in the biological area since the 1980s and also take into account the entry-into-force of the CWC and the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in 1997.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs organized, in 2007, two meetings of a group of experts with the participation of representatives of a number of relevant international organizations. The group discussed the update of the 1989 Guidelines and Procedures. It decided to leave the main document from 1989 unaltered and recognized that a broad review process would necessarily entail the direct involvement of Member States. The group prepared revisions of the Appendices associated with the guidelines and procedures, in particular taking into account the developments in the biological area. The updated Appendices focus on relevant technical biological aspects of investigation of alleged use.

In accordance with the current Guidelines and Procedures “any interested Member State may designate to the Secretary-General relevant specialized training or courses available to qualified experts in support of their possible role on his behalf in carrying out investigations of

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possible use of chemical, biological and toxin agents, in order to facilitate achievement on a common basis of understanding and operation.” The first-ever training course for experts was offered by the Government of Sweden and was conducted in cooperation with ODA in Umea, Sweden from 25 May to 5 June 2009.

In order to further cooperation and enhance technical capabilities of investigation of alleged use, the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning WHO’s support to the Secretary-General’s mechanism for investigation of alleged use.

While the UN and its subsequent organizations have the ability to create resolutions and international solutions, it does not have the power to require insubordinate countries to appear for a trial in the event that they act out against an agreement, as participation in UN is voluntary. While requiring attendance and opening trials into a regular proceeding would probably help the UN’s ability to punish insubordinate countries, the efforts to collect the offender or a representative to try would be costly and likely dangerous.

The UN can however, with support of influential nations, impose economic inconveniences on insubordinate nations. The UN can directly impose sanctions as a resolution against the offending state or states, until the state ceases the illegitimate activity. The effectiveness of this is subjective. Nations within the UN can also impose personal, meaning national, tariffs, sanctions, or cut off funding of offending nations that are more powerful than those that could be imposed by the UN. Blockades, by land or sea, are effective as proven in bouts throughout history, though these means are far riskier, as retaliation is almost sure to ensue. UN is usually not in a position to create a war over not abiding to resolutions.

**Landmark UN resolutions**

**General Assembly:** In 2000 the General Assembly has adopted the Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (A/RES/58/52). This has been readopted with minor changes each year since.

General Assembly resolutions tend to stress general principles for all UN Member States to abide. Interventions in specific conflicts and situations usually are the work of the UN Security Council Two Security Council resolutions are especially pertinent here:

- **A Security Council resolution of 2013, S/RES/2118 (2013), Agreement To Eliminate Syria’s Chemical Weapons**
  This resolution requires that Syria destroy all remaining chemical weapons by mid-2014.

- **Also note the 2015 Security Council resolution, S/RES/2235 (2015): Chemical Weapons Joint Investigative Mechanism.** This resolution gives the Security Council the ability to create a Joint Investigative Mechanism for probing suspected use of chemical weapons.

**Country and Bloc positions**

**China:** The Chinese government has been supportive of the anti-proliferation of chemical

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12 “Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.” United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Investigative Mechanism and the UN Status at a Glance

Egypt entity, and North African nations including recognition of Palestine as a state but rather an entity, and North African nations including Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine, though it denies having acknowledged or denied the recognition of Palestine as a state but rather an entity, and North African nations including Egypt and Morocco. The EU recognizes that

events, good or bad, that take place in the Middle East and North Africa do ultimately affect them. They keep a positive leaning relationship to these nations through economic, political, and humanitarian incentives.  

As of March 2017, the EU had established sanctions against Syria, specifically to several of it’s leading officials as a form of punishment and show of disapproval of the 2013 attack. This movement came after the UN’S attempt to implement sanctions failed due to veto of Russia and China. The EU also donated a sum of 4.6 million euros to OPCW for investigative missions in Syria.

League of Arab States members are divided on chemical weapons issues. They strongly support global disarmament major treaties. But they divided on issues that target Syria. Many strongly support the Syrian government. Others are unhappy with any resolution that weakens the sovereignty of states over their domestic affairs, and prefer that Member States be allowed full control over issues like this. Finally, the Arab League is generally agreed that the most important priority of global disarmament is Israeli nuclear weapons. They agree that Israeli nuclear disarmament should precede any other action.

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): The 120 countries of the UN’S largest voting bloc, the NAM consistently supports treaties and conventions that prohibit and encourage elimination of chemical weapons. But NAM Member States also are cautious about measures

European Union: The 28 Member States of the European Union is based around diplomacy and maintaining peace. While the EU has no explicit views on non-proliferation of chemical weapons, as it focuses more so on humanitarian and economic issues, it does have a governed relationship with 16 non-European nations through a policy called “European Neighborhood Policy’. These nations including many of the Middle Eastern states including Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine, though it denies having acknowledged or denied the recognition of Palestine as a state but rather an entity, and North African nations including Egypt and Morocco. The EU recognizes that

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18 “European Union donates €4.6 million to OPCW Special Missions and the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism.” OPCW.
19 Robin Emmott. “EU targets Syrian military for chemical weapons attacks.” Reuters.
20 “European Union donates €4.6 million to OPCW Special Missions and the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism.” OPCW.
21 “Chemical Weapons Convention.” OPCW.
22 “Compliance With the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction Condition 10(C) Report.” U.S. Department of State
that elevate interational authority, undermine their sovereignty, and transfer power to interional bodies they do not control.

Many of the NAM’s public statements against possession and use of chemical weapons have been cosponsored with China. The US’s 2016 assessment of CWC compliance, however, found a significant number of countries (eighty one) were less-than-compliant, and many of these states belong to the NAM. This does not indicate these states have or are seeking chemical weapons; rather, less-than-compliance might be the result of bureaucratic red tape or slowly functioning government systems. The only states belonging to the NAM whose compliance was uncertain are Syria and Iran.

Russia: Russia has eliminated its massive Cold War era chemical weapons arsenal, a task it completed this September. The accomplishment was an important milestone for Russia. Russia regards chemical disarmament as the responsibility of each member States. It does not accept international authority to demand such activity.

Russian President Vladimir Putin backs the Syrian government of Bashar al Assad in the Syrian civil war, complicating Russia’s relationship with the rest of the UN. In supporting Assad, Russia may appear to accept or tolerate chemical attacks on civilians.

United States: The United States began disposing of older chemical weapons in the late 1960’s, before the resolution to destroy them in 2012 and the 1997 its ratification of the CWC in 1997. Disposal continues at a slow pace. Older techniques, sometimes dismissed as CHASE, for “Cut holes and sink ‘em”, led to environmental concern regarding the dumping of outdated chemical weapons into the oceans. Disposals continues are sites in the United States, now in ways with minimal or no danger to the regional environment or residents. Destruction is achieved through high-temperature incineration. The United States did the work of eliminating the residual chemical weapons manufacturing capability of Libya, and placed a major role in the destruction of Syria’s stock of chemical weapons and precursor chemicals (manufacturing stocks) after the 2013 Ghouta attack.

Since the Syrian attack in April 2017, the under President Donald Trump has led military attacks. These were not directed against chemical stockpiles, but against aircraft associated with the attacks. President Trump authorized an attack with 59 Tomahawk missiles that destroyed or damaged several Syrian fighter jets.

The United States supports action against specific countries that violate chemical weapons principles, especially if they are enemy or isolated countries. But under UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, the United States seems less interested in resolutions that strengthen norms and principles generally.

Proposals for action

The UN has the authority to create such resolutions to control and regulate chemical weapons, as it has powerful and threatening members that can enforce it. The questions become what should the resolution include to ensure that proliferation, by means of manufacturing and stockpiling chemical weapons, ends; under what means can and should the UN enforce the resolution; and how should insubordinate states be dealt with?

Weaknesses in the CWC and differences in interpretation have been major issues in the past; specificity is key. Outlining what the rules are, how states may be audited to ensure they are following protocol, and consequences of non-

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23 Starr and Diamond.
compliance are a necessity for a successful resolution.

At what point or points does the UN overstep its bounds, or what will be the limitations of the UN from the next resolution? Should the UN broaden its power in the disarmament spectrum in order to maintain peace? Russia and China have blocked UN motions to sanction Syria after the April attack, what would be recourse in the event a state blocks a proposed action? What incentives or compromises, if any, could be included in a new resolution in order to bring opposing states into agreement? Are there any more immediate actions that can be taken by the international community, either as a unit as UN, or a suggested course of action upon individual states by the UN?

Specific paths to be considered include:

- **Fact finding**: establish stronger capabilities to investigate claims of chemical weapons use. Such measures require attention to staffing—to avoid political disputes over who gets to investigate allegations—and financing investigations.

- Establish **permanent observatories** located in countries where conflict is happening, to detect chemical weapons use in regions of conflict, and help with faster detection. Again, such measures require attention to staffing—to avoid political disputes over who gets to investigate allegations—and financing investigations.

- **Authorize the Security Council** to demand mandatory investigations of allegations of chemical weapons use, possibly with enforcement capability, upon the vote of the security council.

- **Targeting specific countries** suspected or proven to have used chemical weapons, to be in possession of chemical weapons, or possibly even in possession of chemical weapons precursors.

- **Sanctions**: establish new kinds of trade and travel penalties for countries proven to have used chemical weapons, or possibly found in possession, even if they have not used them.

- **Establish stronger assistance capabilities** for civilians suspected of suffering chemical weapons attacks. Capabilities could include medical measures, as well as centers for refugees and displaced people forced to leave their homes after chemical attacks.

- **Delay action** in favor of other issues, such as nuclear disarmament.
Annex: Recent UN Statements on Chemical Weapons

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE ON THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ALL VICTIMS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE
29 April 2015

This year's Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare is more significant than ever as it marks the 100th anniversary of the first time chemical weapons were deployed on a large scale in battle.

The events in Ypres in 1915 should be a distant memory – but the frightening truth is we are still grappling with the inhumane and indiscriminate effects of chemical weapons today. One hundred years after chlorine gas was used a weapon of war in Ypres, such horrific weapons continue to threaten humankind.

It is an outrage that 90 years after the 1925 Geneva Protocol and nearly 20 years after the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention the list of those we mourn on this Day only grows longer. The world has learned too little from the past – at the expense of innocent people whose lives have been destroyed by chemical attacks.

Just two years ago, reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria served as a shocking wake-up call to the international community about the continuing threat posed by these inhumane weapons. The horrific images of the victims of chemical weapons in Syria should continue to haunt us all.

The multinational effort to rid Syria of its chemical weapons programmed clearly demonstrated what can be achieved when the international community unites. Nearly all of Syria's chemical weapon materials have now been removed or destroyed, and the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons production facilities in the country has commenced. This has been one bright moment in an otherwise devastating conflict which must urgently end for the sake of the country's people, the region and our world.

The most recent reports of the continued alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in the Syrian conflict are deeply disturbing. I strongly condemn any such use by any party to the conflict, call for the perpetrators of such acts to be brought to justice, and reiterate that any use of chemical weapons under any circumstances would be a grave violation of the 1925 Protocol and other relevant rules of customary international law.

On this tragic centenary, I stress again the importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention and strongly urge those few countries that still remain outside this framework to adhere to it without further delay. We will need to maintain our common vigilance until universal membership is attained.

There is no more meaningful way to collectively honor the victims of chemical warfare and make sure that humankind is forever liberated from the ominous threat of the use of chemical weapons. On this Day of Remembrance, let us do more than recall the past; let us shape a new future by renewing our common pledge to rid the world of chemical weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Source:
https://onuci.unmissions.org/en/secretary-general-message-day-remembrance-all-victims-chemical-warfare

GA/DIS/3348
19 October 2007

General Assembly First Committee
CHEMICAL WEAPONS’ CONVENTION DEADLINE OF 2012 FOR DESTRUCTION OF REMAINING CHEMICAL WEAPONS STOCKPILES ’ENORMOUS CHALLENGE’, FIRST COMMITTEE TOLD

Even If Known Stocks Destroyed, States outside Treaty Could Develop Chemical Weapons,
Weaken Determination to Eliminate Weapons of Mass Destruction

On the non-proliferation of chemical weapons, the implementation arm of the Chemical Weapons Convention could claim a number of achievements, including the creation of an effective verification regime and the destruction of more than 30 per cent of existing chemical weapons stockpiles, but enormous challenges remained in order to reach the goal of total destruction by the target date of 2012, the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) heard today.

Opening the thematic debate on other weapons of mass destruction, Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), said that, although the 30 per cent destruction was not insignificant, it had taken 10 years to accomplish, and that left only five years to destroy the remaining 70 per cent of known chemical weapons stocks.

That challenge was particularly daunting for the largest possessors of those weapons -- the Russian Federation and the United States, which, respectively, had destroyed more than 30 per cent and approximately 50 per cent of their stocks. Then, too, the cost of destruction was high, particularly if it was to be carried out with appropriate safety precautions. Plus, even if the destruction of known stockpiles was implemented, the Convention could still be legally and morally weakened if States outside that instrument developed chemical weapons, he warned.

Another panelist, Ralf Trapp, a consultant on chemical and biological weapons, arms control and disarmament, said the chemical industry was now “on the move”, with chemical production taking place in additional parts of the world, in Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa. That changed the picture for chemical manufacturing, involving countries with no past experience in regulating chemical industries, and, therefore, created new challenges for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, especially in the crucial area of verification.

Stressing that the United States was working assiduously to destroy those “horrific weapons” as rapidly as it possibly could, without jeopardizing safety, the representative of the United States said his country had begun destroying chemical weapons in 1990 and, to date, had successfully destroyed 47 per cent of its stockpile. That effort, however, had proven to be more complex than originally anticipated and so it had asked for, and received, an extension. He called on parties and signatories to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions to immediately terminate their offensive chemical and biological weapons programs.

The representative of the Republic of Korea said that, in only 10 years, membership of the Chemical Weapons Convention had reached 182 nations, encompassing 98 per cent of humanity. However, near-universality was not universality. There had been no significant developments in the status of those States that were not parties and whose non-adherence to the Convention was a cause for serious concern. A strong message needed to be delivered encouraging those States to join the rest of the world in the conviction that the international community could, and must, achieve a world free of chemical weapons. For each State party, steady progress towards the total elimination of chemical weapons and their means of production would be a demonstration of an unflinching dedication to reach the goal of the Convention.

Also addressing the Committee today was the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte, who stressed that the incremental growth in membership of the Chemical Weapons Convention, coupled with the efforts under way by its States parties to fulfill their obligations, had testified to the strength of the global norm against chemical weapons. That reinforced the long-standing taboo against the use of such weapons, which dated back to the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Beyond that, the Convention helped to promote multilateralism, the rule of law, and even the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament.
Other panelists included: Horst Reeps, Director of the Verification Division, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; Annalisa Giannella, Personal Representative on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Council of the European Union; Santiago Onate Laborde, Legal Adviser, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; and Liliam Ballon, Minister Counsellor, General Division of United Nations and Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru.

The representatives of Portugal (on behalf of the European Union) and Switzerland spoke during the thematic debate on other weapons of mass destruction.

Mexico’s representative, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden), speaking on the topic of yesterday’s thematic debate -- nuclear weapons -- introduced a draft resolution entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitment”.

The Committee will meet again at 10 a.m. on Monday, 22 October, to resume its thematic debate on other weapons of mass destruction.

Source:

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Security Council extends mandate of UN-OPCW body on chemical weapons use in Syria


31 October 2016 – The UN Security Council today extended by just under three weeks the mandate of the United Nations- Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Joint Investigative Mechanism, the body tasked with identifying those behind chemical weapons attacks in the Syrian civil war.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2314, the 15-member Council also condemned “again in strongest terms” any use of any toxic chemical as a weapon in Syria, and expressed alarm that civilians continued to be killed and injured because of such use in the war-torn country.

The mandate of the Joint Investigative Mechanism has been extended until 18 November 2016, with possibility of further extension before its expiration.

Set up by the Council in 2015, the Mechanism was mandated to identify, to the greatest extent feasible, those involved in the use of toxic chemicals as weapons in Syria. Earlier, a fact-finding mission mandated by the OPCW had determined that a specific incident in the Syrian conflict involved or likely involved the use of toxic chemicals as weapons.

Further in the statement, the Security Council underlined that the use of chemical weapons constituted a serious violation of international law.

It also stressed that individuals, entities, groups or governments responsible for any use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.

Source:
Broadening and enforcing sanctions for countries with chemical weapons capabilities

Bibliography


Broadening and enforcing sanctions for countries with chemical weapons capabilities


