

# CWC Review Conference Report

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## The Seventh Day: Stumbling forward

After the concerted effort to complete the first read-through of the text of the draft declaration on Monday, the Second five-yearly Review Conference for the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) stumbled forward into Tuesday with no new process elaborated as to how the overnight compilation could be transformed into a clean final text.

Deliberations continued through the day in informal consultations in the framework of the Committee of the Whole, with Ambassador Benchaâ Dani (Algeria) in the Chair, and held behind closed doors in the OPCW building.

By the end of the day's activities, the universality section was almost bracket free, while the sections on general obligations and destruction remained heavily bracketed. Only the first few paragraphs of the verification section had been considered again, and these also remained heavily bracketed. At this point, many delegations were acutely aware of the time pressures now involved and new options using facilitators to speed progress were proposed.

### **Tuesday morning**

The morning started in the Ieper Room with a decision to break the subject matter down into the sections of the text that might be more easily manageable. The aim was to try to clean up the text in five sections: universality, general obligations, destruction, verification and activities not prohibited. While this was similar to the procedure for the 'first reading' on Thursday, Friday and Monday, the purpose this time was specifically to aim for consensus text rather than raise issues.

An hour was allocated for the task of cleaning up the section on universality. The hour was up before agreement could be reached on the first paragraph of the section. Roughly three hours later, the universality section had been read through a second time. It was clear at an early stage that this rate of progress would mean that the work on Tuesday would be at least as long as that of Monday.

### **Tuesday afternoon and evening**

The afternoon session was moved to the Ooms Room – a much smaller meeting room in the OPCW building. A limit was put on the number of delegates who could attend – 2 per state party – however, some of the delegations were a little elastic with this rule. The hope seemed to be that narrowing the range of participants would focus discussion. Some countries found this frustrating as many people who had flown in from capitals could not be included in the room and were left waiting with little to do in the delegates lounge. In addition, the ventilation system in the Ooms Room was having difficulty coping with the number of people sitting inside. The rate of progress was not significantly different from that in the larger room, and so the evening consultations were moved back to the Ieper Room around 7pm. The consultations then stretched into the late evening, finally finishing at roughly 9.30pm.

### **Facilitators appointed**

At the end of the Tuesday evening consultations a decision to have two 'facilitators' on specific sections was taken. The suggested procedure seems to be that the facilitators on the

assigned topics will discuss the issues they have been allocated with delegations that feel strongly on the relevant subject matter. Ambassador Maarten Lak (Netherlands) will focus on general obligations and Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco Tonda (Mexico) on destruction. The facilitated consultations on general obligations are scheduled to run in parallel with the main informal consultations during Wednesday morning, with a similar procedure following for destruction in the afternoon.

As the second readings of other sections are completed, further facilitators for subject areas may be appointed.

### **The structure of the draft declaration text**

The text of the draft declaration follows the structure of 'Agenda Item Nine' in the draft agenda that was circulated as document RC-2/1 before the Review Conference and which is available on the OPCW website. There are a number of renditions of this text, confusingly all of them carry the document number RC-2/CRP.1 – a document that exists as a conference room paper only. The paragraph numbers have remained the same as agreed or suggested edits to this text have been made.

The structure of agenda item nine and the paragraph numbers associated with each section in the draft final declaration are as follows:

Review of the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention as provided for in paragraph 22 of Article VIII, taking into account any relevant scientific and technological developments:

- (a) the role of the Chemical Weapons Convention in enhancing international peace and security and in achieving the objectives as set forth in the preamble of the Convention; [paras 1-12]
- (b) ensuring the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention; [paras 13-17]
- (c) implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention relating to:
  - (i) general obligations and declarations related thereto; [paras 18-24]
  - (ii) destruction of chemical weapons and destruction or conversion of chemical weapons production facilities; [paras 25-37]
  - (iii) verification activities of the OPCW; [paras 38-47]
  - (iv) activities not prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention; [paras 48-70]
  - (v) national implementation measures; [paras 71-80]
  - (vi) consultations, cooperation, and fact-finding; [paras 81-90]
  - (vii) assistance and protection against chemical weapons; [paras 91-106]
  - (viii) economic and technological development; [paras 107-14]
  - (ix) Articles XII to XV and final clauses; [para 115] and
  - (x) the protection of confidential information; [paras 116-23]
- (d) the general functioning of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. [paras 124-42]

*This is the eighth report from the Second Review Conference for the Chemical Weapons Convention which is being held from 7 to 18 April 2008 in The Hague. These reports are designed to help people who are not in The Hague to follow the proceedings and are prepared by Richard Guthrie with financial support from the Ploughshares Fund <<<http://www.ploughshares.org>>>.*

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