

Geneva, July 1979

Original: ENGLISH

WORKING PAPER BY THE UNITED KINGDOM ON  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

1. The background documentation should fall into two categories, both taking as their basis, Article XII of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Article dealing with the review process.

2. The first category concerns the review of the Biological Weapons Convention. Article XII notes that the purpose of the Review Conference next year is: "to review the operation of the Convention, with a view to assuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Convention, including the provisions concerning negotiations on chemical weapons, are being realized".

3. The United Nations Secretariat might be asked to prepare a background paper on this subject. The Secretariat might include in this paper a summary of any official communications which the depositaries may have received concerning the implementation of the Convention and any official statements made on this question. As regards the provisions on chemical weapons negotiations, the Secretariat might draw on past reports of the CCD and this year's report of the CD, and refer to action taken by the General Assembly towards a Chemical Weapons Convention.

4. It would be of assistance to parties if, in this paper, the Secretariat would include a summary of the negotiations in the CCD which led up to agreement on the Convention.

5. Article XII of the Convention also provides that: "such review shall take into account any new scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention". The second category of background documentation should be concerned with such developments. The Committee should establish a small, but open-ended, group of experts, who would be asked to conduct such a review and to provide a background paper for the Review Conference. The Secretary of the Preparatory Committee might be asked to arrange an informal meeting during the period when several delegations will have visiting chemical weapons experts present in Geneva.

6. At this meeting, the experts might agree on the general areas which would need to be covered by this review. They would elect a Chairman and a Scientific Secretary who would be asked to prepare, on the basis of the experts' recommendations the first draft of the technological review. By a given date, the Scientific Secretary would send this draft to the parties to the Convention for comment. The Comments would be incorporated into the draft review which would be considered at a second meeting of the group early to be arranged at an appropriate time during the CD Spring Session next year. The final technological report would be presented to the Review Conference.