

Medema

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Subject
Note on training inspectors for the OPCW

Your letter

Dear Matthew,

Enclosed a note on training of inspectors for the OPCW. I hope you find it interesting enough for publication in the Chemical Weapon Convention Bulletin. I personally liked the idea of sending season greetings to the presidents Clinton and Jeltsin asking them to ratify the CWC. I have send the same note to Dick Price from ASA Newsletter. I feel that it is necessary that we do everything we can to have the quickest possible ratification of the Russian Federation and the United States.

Kind regards,

J Medema

Jan Medema
Division Toxic Substances

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Training of OPCW Inspectors, some problems and possible remedies.

The trigger point for the countdown of the 180 days to Entry Into Force (EIF) of the Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC) is there when 65 States have deposited their instruments of Ratification. With respect to training of future OPCW Inspectors three major problems may arise:

- Too short preparation time for the Secretariat and Training Centers.
- Nations that offered Module 1, 2 or 3 training have not ratified.
- Not all 160 inspector candidates can be selected from the 65 States that have ratified.

It is the purpose of this note to elucidate these problems and suggest possible remedies. The author would be delighted to receive comments, particularly regarding alternative remedies.

Training of future OPCW Inspectors will start shortly after the trigger point. The following time line will show how shortly after this point.

The convention requires the chemical weapons inspection to start 30 days after EIF. So if we allow the inspectors who come from different training centers, 30 days to form teams, calibrate the inspection equipment, do some hands on advanced training (during regular training only minimal numbers of equipment's are available) and prepare for the inspections, we have 180 days left. After 140 days of training in Module 1, 2 and 3 courses with about 10 days of travel in between, the inspectors will get 20 days to make final arrangements back home (e.g. arranging for the family to come to The Netherlands, find housing, break up things at home, etc.). So training has to start 10 days after the trigger point. For the training centers involved in Module 1 training, for the PTS as well as for the inspector candidates this is too short. For the National Authority courses given in The Netherlands it took us about one month to arrange travel and visa for everybody from Afghanistan to Cuba, from Azerbidjan to China, from Argentina to Zimbabwe. If you don't believe it just try it yourself.

A possible remedy would be an estimated trigger point. Right now we have 40 ratifications and 10 more on the way before the end of 1995. So it should be possible to assess the trigger point on a monthly basis starting January 1996. If both the PTS and the M1 training centers start to make the necessary preparations two and a half month before the estimated trigger point everything can be arranged properly.

Although it is not formerly stated it seems logical to assume that training is provided by states that have ratified the convention. As long as the Russian Federation and the US are not amongst the 65 ratifications there is an enormous problem. The countries take part in Module 1 and 2 and are the only nations that have offered M3 training (hands on inspection of chemical weapons sites). Several remedies are thinkable:

1. The best way to overcome the problem is by preventing it. So let both the US and the RF be amongst the 65. American and Russian friends please beg your Doema, Congress or Senate to ratify the convention now.
Politically the word NOW seems to have at least two different meanings. When a government says it wants to raise taxes NOW, you can be sure that the necessary laws have been fully prepared and mostly within weeks the raise becomes effective. When a government says it wants to cut taxes NOW, you can be sure that either it will take two years before it becomes effective or the whole stupid idea has been forgotten. The meaning of NOW is that of a tax raise!
Having the RF and US amongst the 65 ratifications is the most preferred option. Unfortunately there is not much that NON-US or NON-RF citizens can do except maybe to send a Christmas card to both presidents urging them to ratify soon as possible.
2. If the RF and the US are not amongst the 65 but ratification from both can be expected in 3 to 4 month the problem is still surmountable. For instance both the RF and US training centers could be asked to give the M1 and some M2 courses in the Netherlands training center. Travel costs of the teachers could be balanced against reduced travel costs of the students.



3. Another easy remedy would be just to forget what seems logical i.e. that a State offering training should have ratified.
4. If it would take the US and RF more than 100 days after the trigger point to deposit their instruments of ratification, we have a serious problem, not only regarding training but in other areas like world trade in chemicals and funding of the OPCW. The only remedies for the training problem are:
 - Training a smaller number of candidate inspectors, this would be acceptable because the number of weapon sites to be visited would be much smaller.
 - Contingency planning for training in other locations e.g. destruction sites in Belgium and Germany.
 - Still providing training in US and RF but under the authority of the PTS.

The first tranche of 140 inspectors (160 candidates) has to come from Nations that have ratified. (A national from a non ratifying country cannot be hired by the Technical Secretariat.) There will be a second tranche of about 80 candidates just after EIF. Right now the PTS is interviewing candidates from all the around 160 signatory states.

For some specialties there is a limited number of acceptable candidates. So if the 160 candidates have to be drawn from only 65 countries there will be a serious shortage in some specialties and those countries all providing 2-3 candidates will be over represented in the inspector corps.

A possible remedy would be to accept also candidates from countries that have signed but not yet ratified. These countries should deposit a sum of money to cover the costs of training with the PTS, say US \$ 200.000 per student from that country. If those states ratify the convention before EIF and the State Party has paid its contribution the money would be returned. If they do not ratify the money can be used to train additional candidates in the second tranche.

Two of the three problems have a relatively easy solution. The ratification of the RF and the US in time is the major issue.

Please send your season greetings to the two presidents telling them that the OPCW (not the organization for the prohibition of Christmas Wishes) needs their superpower support.

