

Forum: First General Assembly

Issue: Measures to prohibit the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons

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Introduction

Chemical and biological weapons were primarily developed and used initially in world war one, in which the expected effect was to create mass casualties through diseases and death in not only human lives but as well as on plants and animals. The usage of biological and chemical weapons had a large effect not only on human lives but as well as on the economy. The weapons are an immense danger to humanity and are considered as weapons of mass destruction. Biological and chemical weapons can be seen to have been used throughout recent history as well as in current events such as in World War 1 & 2 with the development of toxic gas/mustard gas, the development and usage of tear gas in the Vietnam War and the most recent events of chemical agents being used by the forces in the Syrian civil war. The removal of chemical and biological weapons do not remove the threat until the development of the weapons cease as well.

During the first world war, the usage of mustard gas (chemical gas) had such a massive effect on people's opinion on the effects of the weapon on people causing for it to be banned both by sides of the war as well as also as removing any of the mustard gas that countries had in stock. The casualties that were reported just in World War 1 in which only 50 toxic agents were used in the war had caused up to 100,000 people to die with over a million in injuries. During the 1919 Paris Peace Treaties, it was agreed upon by all states to enforce that the usage and ownership of chemical weapons, or any weapons that can bring such vast devastation which were used by the states who had lost war, was strictly not allowed. It seems to continue throughout history, that the usage of chemical and biological weapons are strictly prohibited as it can be seen through several resolutions made by the United Nations in which all states have agreed to pass the resolutions as well as previous treaties and protocols such as the Geneva Protocol, a treaty that was agreed on banning the usage of chemical or biological weapons when there are states in conflict. Even though several bilateral and multilateral agreements have been formed throughout history, as well as treaties and resolutions have been created on prohibiting the usage of bacteriological, biological and chemical weapons. There are still countries that have declared according to the Arms Control Association that "Eight countries declared chemical weapons stockpiles when they joined the CWC: Albania, India, Iraq, Libya, Syria, the United States, Russia and an anonymous state widely believed to be South Korea."

Definition of Key Terms

Chemical Warfare

Chemical Warfare is the usage of chemical weapons or agents such as mustard gas, sarin as a weapon used to harm or kill another human being of the opposing side.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) are weapons that can cause large amounts of casualties on humans as well as have large effects on infrastructure and the environment through a weapon made of chemical, biological, nuclear or radiological design.

Chemical Weapons (CW)

Chemical weapons are weapons that are created by chemicals that have an effect to harm or cause death on humans such as sarin, nerve gas, tear gas etc.

World War

A world war is when several nations both large and small for various parts in the world have conflict with each other on a large scale.

Treaty

A treaty is when two or more states sign a written contract in which each state agrees to follow and uphold the terms of the contract.

Biological Weapons

A biological weapons is a weapon that contains harmful neurotoxins or organisms that are then implemented and used in a weapon to cause large scale casualties and harm to people.

Background Information

Throughout history there has been continuous usage of chemical, bacteriological and biological attacks on various member states from both recent and past times. Furthermore, it can be noticed in the past 120 years the development and production of chemical and biological weapons has fluctuated severely, in which the development and production surged during both World War 1 and World War 2 after its creation in World War 1. Continuing, throughout recent years there has been instances in which states like Syria have used chemical weapons by the governmental regime against its opposing side in the Syrian Civil War.

World War 1 & 2

The first major usage of chemical weapons was observed in World War 1, when they were employed as a countermeasure to trench warfare. Such chemical weapons ranged from tear gas, phosgene, chlorine, and mustard gas, which has been estimated to cause about 90,000 fatalities and 1.3 million casualties. In World War 2, although the usage of chemical weapons were severely reduced by the European powers, the Imperial Japanese army frequently used them in their military campaigns. The aftermath of World War 1 saw to the development of the Geneva Protocols, which serves as the foundation upon which most modern policies regarding chemical and biological weapons are based on.

Germany

Germany was one of the main member states that participated in World War 1. Germany was the first member state during World War 1 that had researched and created the chemical weapon known as mustard gas. Through the development and creation of chemical weapons, had caused a chain reaction with other major member states that had participated in World War 1, causing both the Allies and the Axis powers to develop and create their own chemical weapons. In the second world war, the development and creation of chemical weapons had risen to extreme levels in which Germany had an inventory of several chemical reagents including sarin and tabun. Germany had a stockpile of 78,000 tons of chemical weapons in which these chemical weapons varied from artillery shells, bombs and rockets.

United Kingdom

During World War 1, it was claimed by the United Kingdom that the reason for their development on chemical weapons was due to the fact of Germany and its allies developing and using chemical weapons like mustard gas. But only until World War 2, did United Kingdom set up a biological warfare program that had consisted of several biological reagents such as anthrax, botulism toxins and brucellosis. Even though the United Kingdom had developed and created the biological weapons, they state had never used any of the weapons but it was recognized that it was the first program weapons program to create deadly biological agents that can be weaponized.

Geneva Gas Protocol

The Geneva Gas Protocol, or more specifically the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, was a protocol in the Geneva Conventions, which specifically prohibited the use of chemical and biological weapons in armed conflict. However, in its time of conception, the protocol was full of many limitations: for example, it did not prohibit the production of such weapons, many countries reserved the right to use chemical weapons in retaliation if it has been used against them, and the issue of storage and transfer of the weapons were unaddressed; this allowed countries such as the Soviet Union and the US to stockpile many bacteriological and chemical weapons. Since

then, the protocol was supplemented in the future by additional amendments, and has become the cornerstone on which many international agreements are founded on.

Syrian Civil War

The Syrian Civil War is a war between several regimes with continuous conflict, in which the Syrian Arab Republic under the current President of Syria Bashar Al-Assad against several opposing forces such as the International State of Levant, Syrian Opposition Forces and the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria. The civil war had started after the Arab Spring protests, causing a great hatred from many forces in Syria against Bashar Al Assad's regime, causing armed conflict and hence civil war between the forces.

Chemical Weapon Attack

During the Syrian Civil War, the usage of chemical weapons had been a raising concern after the United Nations had confirmed that an attack using chemical weapons was used by the Syrian government under the Bashar Al Assad regime. Even though the government denied its usage of chemical weapons, it can clearly be seen through the events in the suburbs of Damascus and Aleppo in 2013 with the mass casualties from chemical reagents had raised high concerns. Even though no party claimed to have used the weapons, it was highly accused that the Syrian government had used the chemical weapons. Several countries were highly concerned with the usage of chemical weapons by the Syrian Armed Forces and were demanding for its disarmament of chemical weapons in 2014. Even though there was a disarmament of chemical weapons in 2014, the OPCW had reported that Syria had dropped chlorine bombs on opposition forces during April 2014.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Syria

It has been stated by the Syrian government in the summer of 2012, that they had access and inventory on biological materials used to create biological weapons. Even though the Syrian government claimed they had the stocks of biological materials at the time, there was no valid proof to ensure that they were telling the truth or not. Only until, summer of 2014, that Syria had openly expressed their usage of production facilities and inventory on a poison called ricin. After approximately three years, the existence of the facilities is unknown but it is known that Syria has and may continue to have production facilities as well as inventory of biological weapons and production facilities especially focused on the poison called ricin.

In regards to chemical weapons, it was first declared by the government during September 2013, the government had declared its production facilities and inventory of chemical weapons to the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), after several long years of opposing the idea that any facilities existed. The OPCW had further investigated on the inventory of chemical weapons after the government had declared it, to conclude that the country had a large amount of the nerve agent called mustard gas roughly up to 1,308 tons. At the start of 2016, it was declared by the OPCW that the inventory of the mustard agent had been destroyed. But it is continuously reported that the usage of chemical weapons still occur in Syria, causing the country to be severely questioned in many occasions about the truthfulness on their declaration of the stockpile being destroyed.

On the other hand, it is continuously reported that Syria continues to be developing and producing various chemical weapons and agents such as sarin and VX chemical agents. The Syrian government under the rule of Bashar Al-Assad has been blamed for the usage of chemical weapons and SCUD missiles on opposition parties and sides during the civil war, but all these claims have been denied by the government. Even though, the United Nations and OPCW had made a joint report of stating the Syrian government being responsible for the usage of chemical weapons during the years of 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2016 on its opposing parties had all be denied by the government. Syria has also been known to have been attacked by chemical weapons that were used by the Islamic states in the month of August in 2015 and September of 2016.

Russia

Russia is a known state that has declared its stockpile of biological weapons in 1992 as well as also admitting at the time that they had been producing as well as testing biological weapons in a government assigned program through the years of the 1970s as well as the 1980s. Ironically, Russia had joined the Biological Weapons Convention and has continuously stated that they support as well as wish for all biological weapons to be removed from any states but continuously to keep a stockpile of biological weapons.

Russia, during the time of the Soviet Union had repetitive allegations brought upon them stating that they have a created a biological weapons development program that can develop and create weapons using known deadly diseases such as the plague, anthrax, typhus and smallpox. It was also stated that during the time of the Soviet Union had continued to develop and research several other biological agents and poisons that can not only harm humans but as well as the nature and the living organisms such as farm animals, birds, fish etc. After the Soviet Union had ended and the Russian Federation was formed, the allegations on the usage of biological weapons did not end, as the United States repeatedly stated that Russia is noncompliant with the Biological Weapons Convention and continues to stockpile and produce on the weapons. Russia continues to state that they are only doing research with biological equipment to only better the country in a non-militaristic way, but there is no valid proof to hold up the claims of Russia complying with the Biological Weapons Convention. Since the

declaration in 1992 from the Soviet Union that Russia has a stockpile as well as produces biological weapons, has been seen to be incoherent as well as unsatisfactory in the reports being provided on Russia compliance with the prohibition of biological weapons.

It is widely known as well as has been declared by the Russian government that the country has a stockpile of 40,000 tons of chemical weapons that range from a variety of catastrophic diseases and toxins. It has been recorded that Russia has the largest inventory of chemical weapons, which raises a large concern in regards to Russia complying with the Biological Weapons Convention and the rules that have been set up to prohibit the usage and development of biological, bacteriological and chemical weapons. But in recent years, Russia had agreed in 2012 for the complete destruction of chemical weapons with a joint mission with the OPCW. It was reported by the OPCW that during 2015, Russia had reduced its stockpile from 40,000 tons to 3200 tons showing a drop of 36,800 tons of chemical weapons. By 2017, it was declared by the OPCW that the stockpile of 3200 tons had all been destroyed and Russia no longer had a stockpile of chemical weapons. But the United States still feel reluctant and have accused Russia of hiding a stockpile of chemical weapons from the OPCW, and that not all chemical weapons were destroyed, but there is no such evidence to prove the claim. But in March 4th, 2018, Russia was accused by the United Kingdom on the usage of chemical weapons to assassinate a former Russian spy and his daughter using a chemical toxin, but there is no direct evidence to prove Russia was directly involved with the assassination.

United States of America

The United States had declared that any stockpile of biological weapons had been destroyed by the year 1973 as well as stopping all development programs of biological weapons by 1969, but has stated they fund as well as research a biological defense program. But a report from the Russian government had stated that the United States are not complying with the World Health Organization due to the United States researching on a banned disease, smallpox. Furthermore, Russia continues to report and accuse the United States on biological weapons research in regards to defense but claims that it may have other possible usages.

The United States, had similarly agreed to destroy any stockpiles of chemical weapons, but were unable to completely destroy all weapons by the due year of 2012, but has accomplished the majoritive destruction of weapons by 2016. The OPCW had reported that the United States removed approximately 28,000 tons of chemical weapons, in which all category two and three weapons were removed. It is still projected that in the coming years, the United States will have removed all category one chemical weapons in the next 5 years. Similarly, to the United States accusing Russia of not destroying all chemical weapons, Russia had also accused the United States of stockpiling as well as continuing to develop chemical weapon in working factories. Furthermore, the United States has been accused of not being communicative in regards to the removal of chemical agents in Iraq during a five year period.

Iraq

The controversy with the Iraq reason and the validity of why it occurred revolves around the biological weapons in Iraq. It was declared by the Iraqi Government that the country had an inventory of biological weapons during the mid of the 1990s. But it was also declared that before the 2003 Iraq war with the United States that all biological weapons were removed and the government no longer had a stockpile of biological weapons. Which hence, relates back to no evidence being found when the United States invaded Iraq on the claims of biological weapons to only be left with no viable evidence of there being any stockpiles or inventories of the weapons.

In regards to chemical weapons, Iraq had a extremely developed and in-depth chemical weapons program prior to the Gulf War around the 1960s. The program had several chemical weapon facilities, the research was extremely developed allowing the country to create several chemical toxins. Furthermore, Iraq was able to benefit militaristically through the usage of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war, by installing several weapons with chemical toxins killing large populations in Iran. But the chemical weapon program was stopped after the United Nations intervention, issuing inspectors on the chemical weapons causing the program massively shutdown in the 1990s. During, 1998, Iraq had stated with a joint program with the United Nations Special Commissions, they had worked together to completely finish all chemical weapon programs. Only in 2009, was it reported that there was a small amount of chemical weapon remnants that were not known to the government, in which they were demolished several years later in 2017.

Organization of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

The Organization of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, is a intergovernmental organisation, created and functioned by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The OPCW has a 193 member states and it represents its own seat in the Hague United Nations. The OPCW's main goal is to demolish and terminate any chemical weapons in the world. The OPCW continuously inspects and evaluates on reports of states that have inventories of chemical weapons and ensure to promote and aid in the removal of the chemical weapons in member states. The organisation is highly efficient and has been awarded with its hard work, the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. The OPCW is influential and has the right to state if a member state has used a chemical weapon in an attack and has the right to allow for an investigation to occur. OPCW inspectors continuously work everyday, in focusing on destroying chemical weapon facilities, and only until the inspector ensures that the site has been destroyed, that the OPCW will declare a member state is clear of chemical weapons. Even though the OPCW is not connected with the United Nations as a agency under the UN, both the OPCW and the UN work continuously and have arranged several agreements to have joint operations and programs.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
June 17 th , 1925	The Geneva Protocol was drafted and signed on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons.
July, 1940	The Japanese Army had initiated biological warfare with China causing diseases like the bubonic plague to settle in the city of Ningbo, China.
1969	United States had agreed to create a program to destroy any chemical/biological weapons in the country.
1972	All biological weapons categories from category 2 and 3 were officially destroyed in the United States
April 10 th , 1972	The Biological Weapons and Toxin Convention was formed with twenty two member states at the time and has now grown to 182 parties in 2018.
1973	The United States officially destroyed all biological weapons.
April 22 nd , 1997	The Organization for the Prohibition for Chemical Weapons was formed.
March 20 th , 2003	The Iraq War had started between Iraq and the United States with the reason of the Iraqi government allegedly having an inventory of chemical/biological weapons.
December 18 th , 2011	The Iraq War had ended after a 8 year long war, in which there was no chemical/biological weapons found in inventory under the Iraq government.
April 4 th , 2017	The Khan Shaykhun Chemical attack had occurred with the alleged crimes of the Syrian government using chemical weapons against the opposing regime in the civil war.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their direction, 12 December 2017 **(A/RES/72/43)**
- Agreement to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons - Syrian Civil War, 27 September 2013 **(S/RES/2118)**
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, 13 December 2017 **(A/RES/72/71)**
- Preventing catastrophe: a global agenda for stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non -State actors, 1 December 2016, **(S/2016/1013)**
- Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, 12 December 2017 **(A/RES/72/42)**
- Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, 28 April 2004 **(S/RES/1540)**

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The Agreement of the Geneva Protocol

The Geneva Protocol is the common term derived from the protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. The Geneva Protocol was created to prohibit the use of biological and chemical weapons in regards to armed conflicts. The protocol was signed seven years after World War 1 ended on 17th June 1925. It was understood that the development of chemical weapons such as mustard gas which was used in 1917 during World War 1, was one of the most deadly weapons created that would cause severe casualties and deaths.

It was registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on 7 September 1929.[4] The Geneva Protocol is a protocol to the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War signed on the same date, and followed the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907. During the creation of the Geneva Protocol, there was thirty eighth member states that had originally signed the treaty to prohibit the use of chemical, bacteriological and biological weapons. In which it allowed thirty eight states to unify together on a agreement to end the usage of the weapons, in which France was the first member state to sign the treaty. As of 2015, there are currently 140 member states that have signed the protocol.

The Creation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

The BWC was the first multilateral agreement between member states on the disarmament and prohibition in the creation, research and inventory of weapons of mass destruction which include biological weapons. The treaty was signed on 10th April 1972, with the intention to help combat the issue if the usage of weapons of mass destruction like biological weapons. The BWC was created due to several efforts in attempt to create an international community that can help in aiding and enforcing the Geneva Protocol. The BWC is able to prohibit the use of biological, bacteriological and chemical weapons as the the treaty states, in which member states have signed states “Each State Party to this Convention undertakes never in any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain:

- (1) Microbial or other biological agents, or toxins whatever their origin or method of production, of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;
- (2) Weapons, equipment or means of delivery designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.” (BWC, Article 1)

There is currently 182 member states that have agreed and joined the BWC, in which each state party is required under the agreements they had signed to give reports annually on the activities of development facilities, to allow the BWC to be aware if there is any activity with biological weapons.

The Implementation of the Organization of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

The OPCW was created as stated before as a government organisation to aid in the prohibition of chemical weapons, it currently has 113 member states and its own seat in the United Nations The Hague. The reason the OPCW are so effective in aiding for the prohibition of chemical weapons as they have continuous, everyday inspections by investigators of the OPCW that ensure to investigate and destroy with agreement with member states of any known chemical weapon stockpiles or facilities. The investigators continue to inspect states to view the compliance between member states of the OPCW and their compliance in agreeing to allow the inspections to occur. Furthermore, the OPCW ensure that no member states are not producing or stockpiling on any chemicals weapons or production facilities used to create the weapons. The OPCW also respond to any suspicions or allegations on production facilities or usage of chemical weapons and can be seen through past examples with the alleged use of chemical weapons from the government of Syria under the regime of Bashar Al-Assad.

Possible Solutions

There are many ways to solve the current issue of prohibiting the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons. Firstly, the usage of a sanction to punish any current known users of chemical and bacteriological weapons as well as hence taking more severe actions by bringing the users to the international court of justice to be trialed. This is to allow member states to understand and realize that the usage of such weapons of mass destruction are not to misused as well as also understood that if used that there will be punishments following its usage. Continuing, the usage of a sanction on states such as economic sanctions or diplomatic sanctions can have a severe impact on countries as it can affect the trade through imports and exports as well as relations with other countries. As well as to understand that sanctions should only be given out to states that can clearly be proven to be hiding the usage and production of the weapons as well as not being cooperative in the attempt to aid any investigators from the OPCW or the United Nations in the task to ensure a state is clear of any weapons that are bacteriological, biological or chemical.

Secondly, the higher employment of OPCW investigators to ensure the prevention of such weapons to even be produced. Furthermore, to allow investigators to have the right to inspect member states under suspicion of usage or production of the chemical, bacteriological or biological weapons. The the increased usage of investigators will allow for an efficient as well as effective attempt in tackling states that are attempting to hide the production or usage of chemical or bacteriological weapons. The increase in investigators will allow for each investigator to have a decreased amount of work, and be

more focused on a particular task than several to allow for a more detailed and in-depth investigation on the issue at hand.

Thirdly, regulate the selling and buying of materials that are used to create chemical as well as biological weapons, as well as also regulating the production of certain weapons to ensure that any common chemical weapons such as sarin, mustard gas and so on are not being produced. Hence, if OPCW investigators as well as the organization are able to regulate the usage as well as the trade between the materials of the creation of the weapons, it will allow the regulation and stoppage of the weapon being produced. Therefore, allowing for their to be a prohibition against bacteriological and chemical weapons, as there will be a regulation in the materials needed to create the weapons.

In conclusion, it can clearly be noticed that through the usage of regulation of materials in creation of the weapons, higher employment on OPCW investigators to increase efficiency in investigating the usage of the weapons and also the usage of sanctions on states that do not comply or have used chemical, bacteriological or biological weapons. Each solution can allow an effective way in combating the usage of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

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