

FACT SHEET - #6

SUBJECT: 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention

1. **PURPOSE.** To provide information concerning the 1993 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC).

2. **FACTS.**

a. Following complex and protracted negotiations, the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in 1993 produced the subject treaty.

b. Article 1 prohibits the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer, or use of chemical weapons, and prohibits military preparation for their use. It provides for the destruction of existing materials and the destruction of chemical weapons production facilities.

c. Article 1 prohibits the use of riot control agents as a "method of warfare." However, the treaty's definitions and criteria do not prevent the use of chemical weapons for law enforcement (including domestic riot control) purposes.

d. The United States signed the treaty in January 1993 and ratified it in April 1997, becoming an original State Party to the treaty.

e. The Senate specified in its ratification that the treaty shall have no effect on Executive Order 11850 (1975). EO 11850 permits the use of riot control agents in defensive military operations to save lives, such as rescue missions and enemy attacks in which civilians are used as screens. EO 11850 remains in effect, and the United States is not restricted in its use of riot control agents in various peacetime and peacekeeping operations.

3. POC is the Administrative Law Division at 4-7414/4668.

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