

Third Session
Geneva, 27 November-8 December 1995

FRIEND OF THE CHAIR ON DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

Summary of views on definition and threshold quantities

This paper is without prejudice to the positions of delegations on the issues under consideration in the Ad Hoc Group and does not imply agreement on the scope or content of the paper.

Definition

There was a general understanding that definition of terms was needed for some terms, particularly technical terms in connection with specific measures. Some terms which were proposed in the Group to be defined were as follows:

1. Genetic modification or manipulation
2. Biological defence
3. Military medical programme
4. National biological defence programme
5. Diagnostic facility
6. Military related biodefence programme
7. BL3

Thresholds

Regarding threshold quantities, several comments were made that it was difficult to develop a threshold level for microorganisms such as viruses, bacteria and fungi, due to their ability of being self replicating.

One delegation expressed the view that the maximum quantity of one type of a listed

biological agent or toxin used for testing means of defence was 5 kg and did not need declaration. Any one-time presence at a facility of more than 1,000 kg of a listed biological agent or toxin must be prohibited, except for cases when that threshold could be surpassed and justified by the production of vaccines or other medical and preventive substances.

Regarding thresholds of toxins, discussions were held on the possibility of having some quantitative thresholds for toxins as a trigger for declarations. The Group would further consider the issue at its next meeting.
