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CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 13 December 1978 from the Permanent Representative of
the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a note containing an invitation from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to all States Members of the United Nations to participate in an expert meeting on the verification of a ban on the manufacture of chemical weapons to be held in the Federal Republic of Germany in the spring of 1979.

I should like to request you to circulate the text of the note as an official document of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons".

At the same time, on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to extend to you an invitation to nominate a member of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament to attend the expert meeting mentioned above on behalf of the United Nations Secretariat.

I would be very grateful to you if you could inform me whom you will be designating to attend the seminar, if possible not later than 15 January 1979.

(Signed) Rüdiger von WECHMAR

ANNEX

Note verbale dated 12 December 1978 from the Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations
addressed to the Permanent Missions of all Member States

The Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations and has the honour to transmit an invitation from the Federal Republic of Germany to attend an expert meeting on the verification of a ban on the manufacture of chemical weapons.

1. The Federal Republic of Germany considers the conclusion of a convention concerning an effective and comprehensive ban on chemical weapons as an already existing means of mass destruction a matter of urgent priority. It appreciates the efforts being made by the United States of America and the Soviet Union in bilateral talks for a joint initiative in this context.
2. A convention prohibiting the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and providing for the destruction of existing stocks requires above all a verification arrangement commensurate with the military significance of chemical weapons. Verification is the basis for confidence in compliance with such a prohibition. The Federal Republic of Germany, therefore, advocates an international verification system providing for a variety of controls which should include also international on-site inspections. It is convinced, not least on the strength of its own experiences with specific international controls in this area, that such a verification system, including also on-site inspections, can be designed so as not to prejudice the legitimate interests of industry and research.
3. With reference to its working paper (A/S-10/AC.1/13) of 6 June 1978 and following up the remarks made by the Federal Chancellor on 26 May 1978 at the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, the Federal Government invites representatives of the States Members of the United Nations to attend the planned verification workshop which will be held from 12 to 14 March 1979 in the Cologne-Frankfurt area. The Federal Government will give the experts attending the workshop the opportunity to see for themselves, at four different plants of the German chemical industry manufacturing phosphorus organic compounds, that the equipment for manufacturing phosphorus compounds for civilian purposes is not suitable for manufacturing phosphorus compounds of military significance and that it is in practice feasible to carry out verification controls of chemical plants while fully protecting the interests of industry and research.
4. By demonstrating the feasibility of appropriate controls to verify a ban on manufacture, the Federal Republic of Germany hopes to contribute to the discussion on verification arrangements for a chemical weapons convention and to facilitate the conclusion of such a convention.

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5. Interested Governments are requested to forward, not later than 15 January 1979, the names of those who will be attending the workshop, either to the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations in New York or to the Delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, which will also give them further details of the workshop programme.