

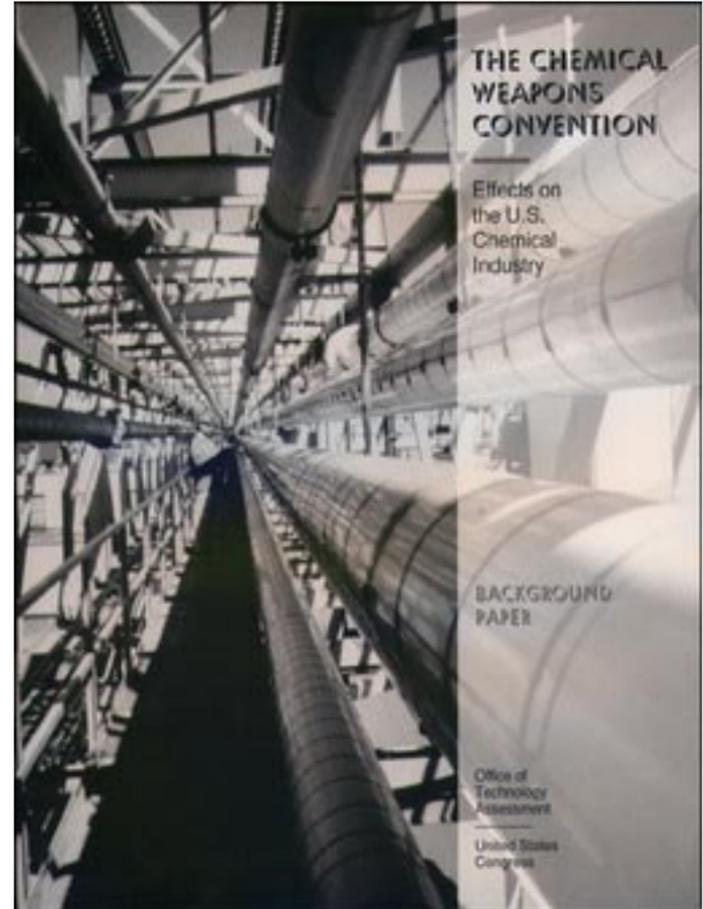
*The Chemical Weapons Convention: Effects
on the U.S. Chemical Industry*

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Foreword

Historically, arms control treaties have had little direct impact on private industry. With a few rare exceptions--such as the onsite inspections of missile-production plants mandated by the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty—such agreements have not covered manufacturing facilities but have sought to limit the numbers of deployed weapon systems. For this reason, the impending implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) will bring about a fundamental change in the practice of arms control.

The Convention, which is expected to enter into force in early 1995, bans the development, production, and use of chemical weapons. Since these activities are hard to detect with national technical means of verification such as reconnaissance satellites, the CWC is unprecedented in its requirement for intrusive onsite inspections of commercial production facilities, particularly those manufacturing “dual-use” chemicals that have legitimate commercial applications but can also be converted into chemical-warfare agents. Indeed, the ability to conduct onsite inspections at any one of tens of thousands of chemical plants worldwide will be essential to maintain confidence that all parties to the treaty are complying with its provisions,

This background paper explores the multifaceted challenge of integrating a private, primarily civil industry into the global arms-control regime established by the CWC. The interaction between industry and arms control raises new and challenging issues, such as reconciling the intrusive verification provisions of the treaty with the privacy protections of the U.S. Constitution, and addressing the concern that CWC-mandated declarations and inspections of chemical plants could provide opportunities for industrial espionage. Implementation of the Convention will entail an unavoidable tradeoff between the need to gather enough information to verify treaty compliance and the risk that intrusive inspections could jeopardize valuable trade secrets. The background paper concludes, however, that advance preparation by industry can mitigate such concerns.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence requested this background paper. It is one product of a larger OTA assessment, requested by several congressional committees, of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.



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NOTE: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The panel does not, however, necessarily approve, disapprove, or endorse this background paper. OTA assumes full responsibility for the background paper and the accuracy of its contents.

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