FRENCH NON-PAPER
ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF RESERVATIONS TO THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL

The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925 and for which France is depositary, is the precursor to the two pillars of modern disarmament: the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) and the 1993 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC).

At the crossroads of humanitarian demands and disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, this instrument remains topical, especially in the biological domain, where it is the only text to prohibit the use of biological weapons in war.

Considering the Protocol has been in force for over 80 years, it is understandable that some States have not recently examined their status with regard to the text. Yet many States have withdrawn their reservations in recent years. Only 22 States still hold reservations that are often incompatible with the commitments made within the framework of the BTWC and CWC.

Therefore, France calls upon all States Parties who made reservations at the time of their accession to the Protocol to consider withdrawing them in a constructive manner with a view to ensuring the absolute prohibition of chemical and biological weapons.

France has a website with the list of all States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and a list of reservations. This information is available for all in French only at:

www.doc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/pacte/
(Under the heading “Traités multilatéraux – France dépositaire”, n°15”)