



Standing Committee Report Summary

The Chemical Weapons Convention (Amendment) Bill, 2010

- The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers (Chairperson: Shri Gopinath Munde) submitted its 9th Report on 'The Chemical Weapons Convention (Amendment) Bill, 2010 on August 3, 2010. The Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on April 16, 2010.
- The Chemical Weapons Convention Act was enacted to give force to India's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention bans the development, production, acquisition, transfer, use and stockpile of all chemical weapons. The Bill was introduced to (a) give the central government greater powers to appoint enforcement officers, (b) modify the process of transfer of chemical weapons to comply with the Convention, (c) modifies penalties for offences under the Act.
- The Committee agreed to the government's proposal to give the central government greater powers to appoint enforcement officers. The Committee recommended that eligibility criteria should be set by rules. The criteria should ensure that officers with technical qualifications and relevant expertise would be appointed as enforcement officers. The Committee also recommended that officers should be given suitable training before their appointment.
- The Act prevents the transfer of specified chemicals to any person in a country which is not a party to the Convention. The Bill modifies this provision to prevent the transfer of chemicals to or from any party which is not a member of the Convention. The Committee recommended that the provision should clearly prohibit transfers to or from member countries as well as individuals who are not citizens of member countries.
- The Bill seeks to change the process of registration of manufacturers of specified chemicals. It gives the central government the power to make registration mandatory subject to certain threshold limits which may be prescribed. The Committee observed that this discretion given to the central government will result in making registration mandatory only for units covered in terms of threshold limits. The rest of the chemical industry would be free from the compulsion of registration. The government was asked to consider a two-step process of compulsory registration of all manufacturers, and subsequent declaration by those crossing the threshold limits.

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