

# ***Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (Geneva Protocol), June 1925***

U.S. Department of State

Before World War II the protocol was ratified by many countries, including all the great powers except the United States and Japan. When they ratified or acceded to the protocol, some nations -- including the United Kingdom, France, and the USSR -- declared that it would cease to be binding on them if their enemies, or the allies of their enemies, failed to respect the prohibitions of the protocol. Although Italy was a party to the protocol, it used poison gas in the Ethiopian war. Nevertheless, the protocol was generally observed in World War II. Referring to reports that the Axis powers were considering the use of gas, President Roosevelt said on June 8, 1943:

*Use of such weapons has been outlawed by the general opinion of civilized mankind.*

*This country has not used them, and I hope that we never will be compelled to use them. I state categorically that we shall under no circumstances resort to the use of such weapons unless they are first used by our enemies.*

The protocol and the convention were ratified by President Ford on January 22, 1975. The U.S. instrument of ratification of the convention was deposited on March 26, 1975, and of the protocol on April 10, 1975.

## **Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare**

*Signed at Geneva June 17, 1925*

*Entered into force February 8, 1928*

*Ratification advised by the U.S. Senate December 16, 1974*

*Ratified by U.S. President January 22, 1975*

*U.S. ratification deposited with the  
Government of France April 10, 1975*

*Proclaimed by U.S. President April 29, 1975*

## *Geneva Protocol cont.*

The Undersigned Plenipotentiaries, in the name of their respective Governments:

Whereas the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices, has been justly condemned by the general opinion of the civilized world; and

Whereas the prohibition of such use has been declared in Treaties to which the majority of Powers of the World are Parties; and

To the end that this prohibition shall be universally accepted as a part of International Law, binding alike the conscience and the practice of nations;

### **Declare:**

That the High Contracting Parties, so far as they are not already Parties to Treaties prohibiting such use, accept this prohibition, agree to extend this prohibition to the use of bacteriological methods of warfare and agree to be bound as between themselves according to the terms of this declaration.

The High Contracting Parties will exert every effort to induce other States to accede to the present Protocol. Such accession will be notified to the Government of the French Republic, and by the latter to all signatory and acceding Powers, and will take effect on the date of the notification by the Government of the French Republic.

The present Protocol, of which the French and English texts are both authentic, shall be ratified as soon as possible. It shall bear today's date.

The ratifications of the present Protocol shall be addressed to the Government of the French Republic, which will at once notify the deposit of such ratification to each of the signatory and acceding Powers.

The instruments of ratification of and accession to the present Protocol will remain deposited in the archives of the Government of the French Republic.

## *Geneva Protocol cont.*

The present Protocol will come into force for each signatory Power as from the date of deposit of its ratification, and, from that moment, each Power will be bound as regards other powers which have already deposited their ratifications.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Protocol.

DONE at Geneva in a single copy, this seventeenth day of June, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty-Five.