Defence & Security · GS - III

Examine the role of international arms-control agreements in preventing the use of chemical weapons and maintaining regional security amid rising geopolitical tensions.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Chemical Weapons Convention, OPCW, disarmament, verification mechanisms, non-proliferation, regional stability, diplomatic confidence-building

Model Answer

Introduction

The alleged development of chemical weapons by a State, even when unverified, can heighten regional tensions and raise concerns about the effectiveness of international disarmament arrangements. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) provides the principal global framework for eliminating such weapons.

Role of International Arms-Control Agreements

1. **Prohibition and disarmament:** The CWC prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, creating binding obligations for States Parties.

2. **Verification and transparency:** The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) conducts inspections and monitors declared facilities and destruction activities, strengthening confidence in compliance.

3. **Non-proliferation:** International controls on toxic chemicals, precursors and relevant production facilities help prevent the diversion of legitimate industrial materials for prohibited purposes.

4. **Accountability:** Investigation and verification mechanisms help establish facts, discourage violations and strengthen international responses to alleged chemical-weapons use.

Persistent Challenges

1. **Verification limitations:** Undeclared facilities, concealment and restricted access can complicate investigations.

2. **Geopolitical rivalries:** Strategic mistrust may encourage States to interpret uncertain threats as justification for military escalation.

3. **Weak enforcement:** Political divisions within international institutions can obstruct collective responses.

Way Forward

1. Strengthen OPCW's technical and investigative capabilities.
2. Promote transparent, evidence-based investigations before attributing responsibility.
3. Use diplomatic channels and confidence-building measures to prevent unilateral escalation.
4. Improve international cooperation against chemical-weapons proliferation.

Conclusion

International arms-control agreements are essential for reducing catastrophic security risks. Their credibility depends on impartial verification, effective accountability and sustained diplomatic engagement.

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