

ENFORCING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR USERS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

In 2012, a 20-year moratorium on state employment of chemical weapons use was broken. Since then there have been more than 200 instances of use—against civilians, military targets, and political enemies. These attacks have violated norms against the use of weapons of mass destruction and create a gap in the nonproliferation fabric—despite the robust international architecture of laws, treaties, agreements, and mechanisms designed to restrain the proliferation and use of these weapons. Accountability for these recent attacks has been limited or nonexistent, which threatens the credibility of the nonproliferation regime and only encourages further use. Leaders must find the political and moral strength to use a full spectrum of tools to reestablish this system of restraint.

SYSTEM OF RESTRAINT

for Proliferation and Use of Chemical Weapons

A global system of reinforcing factors has developed over time to shape behavior and encourage restraint through distinct, but often mutually reinforcing, mechanisms. These include:

- taboos
- norms
- lack of benefit
- deterrence

While somewhat resilient, the system requires engagement and enforcement to promote and sustain restraint in the face of repeated violation of norms, perceptions of increasing utility, ease of access, and diminished international attention.

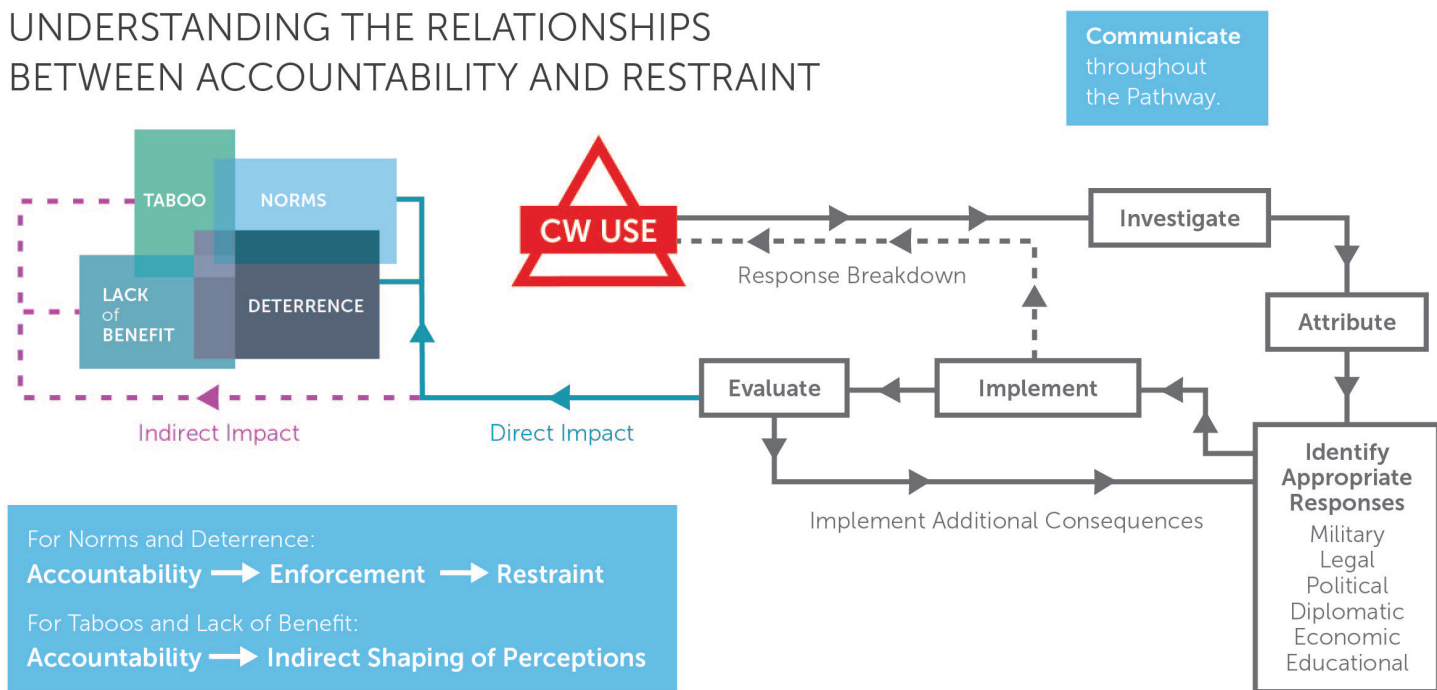
Accountability Pathway After Use

To restore restraint after CW use, the international community must respond consistently to each use of chemical weapons using accountability pathways that include:

- strong investigative practices
- scientifically sound attribution techniques
- legally binding consequences
- persistent implementation
- thorough evaluation, and
- coordinated deterrence messaging throughout the process.

Failure to provide accountability and enforcement will result in the continued erosion of restraint on the proliferation and use of chemical weapons with implications for the broader non-proliferation regime as well.

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESTRAINT



Accountability Menu of Responses

The international community needs a more creative and comprehensive process for responding to and coordinating responses to CW use. Responses across the three levels across three levels (national, multilateral, and international) utilize six sets of tools (military, legal, political, diplomatic, economic, and education and outreach) to provide a flexible, tailorable, scalable, and implementable accountability menu.

RESTORING RESTRAINT

Today, political leaders must again find the moral courage to stand up against the use of chemical weapons, hold accountable those who choose to act against international peace and security through the use of these weapons, and enforce the norms intended to restrain their use.

To date, efforts to hold users of chemical weapons accountable have relied on stove-piped approaches, with little flexibility, and inconsistent responses. Many potential pathways for accountability have been clipped and existing pathways have been perilously narrowed. In turn, users of chemical weapons have been enabled, indeed encouraged, to skirt and test the international community's willingness to respond.

By employing the following strategies using a tailorable menu of diverse, flexible, scalable, and implementable options, the international community can reinforce the system of restraint and hold accountable users of chemical weapons:

- Create a "Zero Tolerance" Culture for CW Use
- Strengthen Coalitions
- Fill Technical Gaps
- Establish/Reform Institutional Mechanisms
- Expand Judicial Pathways to Accountability
- Engage, Expand, and Strengthen Civil Society

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