

PREFACE

This Handbook was first compiled in 1992 to provide background information to Canadian officials with regard to the potential scope of verification of industry worldwide under a Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). With the opening for signature in January 1993 of the CWC, elements of the Handbook were further examined and refined with a view to sharing the document with others now addressing questions related to the practical implementation of the Convention.

The Handbook includes chemical-specific information, such as physical properties, modes of synthesis, and toxicity, all categories of information that are reasonably 'stable' over time. Other data on uses and suppliers are also included, including numbers and locations of companies producing or making available scheduled chemicals for legitimate commercial purposes. Since this information comes from a variety of public sources, it suffers from the usual difficulties relating to timeliness, consistency and comprehensiveness. Taken together, however, they provide an interesting data bank, with both enduring and more current components, that can be used as a foundation for further detailed studies on the commercial availability of scheduled chemicals.

Written by a consultant from the University of Saskatchewan in conjunction with the Verification Research Unit of External Affairs and International Trade Canada, the document also reflects commentary received from contacts at Merck-Frosst Canada Inc. and the Department of Industry, Science and Technology Canada.