

provisions of the chemical weapons convention to toxin weapons. However, given the nature of modern biotechnology, verification to a high level of assurance may never be entirely feasible in relation to biological and toxin weapons.

Canada was an original party to the BTWC and has participated actively in all review conferences. We have pressed strongly for improved confidence-building measures, particularly in the form of exchanges of data on related defence research facilities. Canada is one of the few countries to have participated fully in each of these annual data and information exchanges.

Canada will continue to promote measures that would enhance confidence in compliance with the BTWC. Specific improvements and additions to the CBMs at the Third Review Conference originated with the Canadian delegation, which was led by Ambassador for Disarmament Peggy Mason. Canada, with others, also pressed for detailed consideration of a compliance (verification) regime by an Ad Hoc Group of Experts. This proposal received wide support and ultimately consensus agreement at the Conference. The Group, which will hold its first meeting from March 30 to April 10, is to identify and examine potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint. Canada will participate in the study.

As noted in *Bulletin 17*, prior to the Third Review Conference Canada formally modified its reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol by removing them insofar as they relate to bacteriological methods of warfare. At the Third Review Conference, the Canadian delegation led the effort that culminated in the Conference stressing the importance of the withdrawal of *all* reservations to the Geneva Protocol related to the BTWC. Other States Parties, including the United Kingdom, have since announced similar action.

All told, the outcome of the Third Review Conference reflected well upon the preparations and efforts of the Canadian delegation. The next Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention review conference will be held no later than 1996. ■

A CW Convention in '92?

The use of chemical weapons (CW) by Iraq against Iran in their war and the threat of CW use during the 1991 Gulf campaign added impetus to the negotiations for a CW convention at the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Last May 13, USA President George Bush called for the negotiations to be completed in mid-1992, and in June the CD set a mandate for its Ad Hoc Committee on a CW convention to complete the negotiations in 1992.

The current round of negotiations has been under way since 1984 and there are now only a few core outstanding issues. These still represent a substantial barrier to achieving a text that is rigorous, economical, adequately verifiable, adaptable and likely to attract universal adhesion.

During 1991, the CD made headway on some important technical questions such as the lists of chemicals, the thresholds for control and reporting, and on certain legal and institutional questions, including some important definitions. The USA's decision to forego retention of a retaliatory CW capacity (part of the May 13 announcement) allowed a blanket ban on CW use to be included in the agreement. Despite this progress, differences remain. In general, they are not specifically North-South or East-West, although the Group of 21 (neutral and non-aligned countries) has taken strong positions on certain issues.

Among the major outstanding issues are: challenge inspections; "capable" industries and their treatment; the role and composition of the Executive Council; trade controls in relation to the convention; and the treatment of old stocks.

On challenge inspections, there was some discussion in 1991 on how to achieve an appropriate balance between the need of international inspectors to gain early access to the vicinity of a site, secure it, and examine its installations, and the right of the inspected state to protect its most sensitive locales and installations through appropriate safeguards. Getting this balance right is central to the effectiveness of a convention.

The convention is expected to provide some means for covering the activities of

the bulk of the world's chemical industries which do not produce scheduled chemicals but could be capable of doing so. Means of demarcating the industries subject to inspection and monitoring their activities have been discussed.

Discussion of the composition of the Executive Council of the new international CW organization has as yet been only preliminary. There are certain to be differences over whether states with larger industrial or military interests should benefit from weighted or guaranteed representation.

Possible use of trade controls on chemicals has been suggested by one Western country as a means of inducing countries to adhere to a CW convention, while some Group of 21 countries have sought assurances of non-discrimination in the use of trade controls on chemicals among parties to the convention.

Old stocks of CW are a source of public concern in certain countries affected by military operations in former years, or concerned about potential problems of accountability. There are complex difficulties of ownership, liability and disposal associated with this class of problem.

In addition to these, negotiators have to deal with a range of less acute problems both of a technical and a legal/political nature. Once an agreed working text is achieved it must be made internally consistent and updated, and must then receive the attention of legal drafters to put it into treaty form. If outstanding problems are resolved quickly, a text for signature could be ready by the fall of 1992.

Canada attaches a high priority to the CW negotiations. In our estimation, conclusion of a strong, verifiable chemical weapons convention would be the most effective response to the threat of CW proliferation.

Canada has participated vigorously in the negotiations since their inception, and was an early and strong advocate of effective verification measures in a CW convention. We have made available to the Ad Hoc Committee studies and documentation bearing on its work, and have provided strong representation for its subsidiary bodies.