

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

Mr. President, before concluding I would like to turn to another issue of major importance, the negotiation of a comprehensive, verifiable ban on chemical weapons, which remains the most active item on our agenda. Canada is pleased that the negotiating momentum which developed last year and the year before, under two very able chairmen, is being increased at the current CD session under the skilful Chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéyus and we intend to continue our active participation in those negotiations. At the beginning of the summer part of the session the Canadian delegation will, as in the past, be providing to all participants our updated compendium of all CD documents relating to our chemical weapons negotiations.

Statements this week in this forum relating to further allegations of chemical weapon use in the Gulf war are tangible proof of the need to make deliberate haste in these negotiations. They also underline the importance of including in the treaty we are negotiating a provision for an unqualified, verifiable ban on the use of chemical weapons going beyond use and including, of course, possession, destruction, etc. Canada commends the recent action of the United Nations Secretary-General in initiating an investigation of these latest allegations of chemical weapon use.

The verification of such allegations of chemical or toxin weapon use is a subject to which Canada has devoted considerable research effort. We have initiated our own investigative activities in relation to certain such allegations in the past. We have drawn on this experience and that of others in making reports to the United Nations Secretary-General. In December 1985 we submitted to the Secretary-General a handbook dealing in a systematic and detailed way with various procedural aspects of such investigations. The handbook was also subsequently put forward in this forum. I want to announce that Canada has continued its follow-up work in relation to other practical and technical aspects of such investigations. The results will be made available to the United Nations very soon.