

In June 1985, Beesley recommended widespread support for the UN Secretary-General's fact-finding mission into the allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons. He linked the consequent urgency of the negotiations with the need to uphold and strengthen the Geneva Protocol and to avoid any situation in the future where the renunciation of a modern chemical weapons treaty would also free the state in question from pre-existing obligations under the Geneva Protocol. He voiced serious concern that the confirmed reports of actual use of chemical weapons in the Iraq-Iran war did not bode well for the long-term significance of international law.<sup>4</sup>

In his last public address to the CD during the 1985 session, Ambassador Beesley reported on a Canadian study concerning the legality of inspecting private chemical companies at short notice.<sup>5</sup> The study concluded that, in the Canadian case, existing legislation would allow for verification which includes on-site inspection at short notice.

During the 1985 session of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, there were some qualified successes regarding treaty language banning civilian production of certain precursor chemicals, but not all supertoxic lethal chemicals were covered. Basic problems involving verification and compliance remained, despite efforts to overcome them.

At the 40th General Assembly of the United Nations in September 1985, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark, stated that an "early conclusion of a chemical weapons treaty is now within reach in the Conference on Disarmament." He promised that Canada would "develop and make available to the UN, practical studies on chemical weapons use, along with Canadian specialists to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons."<sup>6</sup> On 4 December 1985, Canadian representatives presented

<sup>4</sup> CD/PV 313, 18 June 1985.

<sup>5</sup> CD/PV 322, 18 July 1985.

<sup>6</sup> DFA Statements and Speeches, no. 85/10.