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JOE CLARK LEADS CANADIAN DELEGATION TO
PARIS CONFERENCE ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, will lead the Canadian Delegation at the Conference on chemical weapons in Paris, January 7-11, 1989. The Conference, hosted by the French Government, will focus international attention on the need to eliminate chemical warfare.

"Canada's interest in this subject is long-standing. Canadians have not forgotten that their soldiers in the First World War were among the first to suffer the terror and pain caused by the use of chemical weapons" said Mr. Clark.

The Paris Conference will reinforce the authority and status of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare. In addition, the Paris meeting is intended to provide increased impetus to the Conference on Disarmament which is negotiating a total verifiable ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

Mr. Clark will use this opportunity to reaffirm long-established Canadian policy against chemical warfare and emphasize the need to conclude as soon as possible a treaty banning chemical weapons altogether. Under Canada's Verification Research Programme, extensive work has been done on verification of a future convention, including procedures which could be used to verify allegations of the use of chemical weapons. This work has already been shared with the international community. Canada does not produce chemical weapons. Further, in informal coordination with other countries, Canada has placed certain chemicals under export controls with a view to ensuring that Canada does not contribute to the development of chemical weapons capabilities. The Government has had the full support of the Canadian Chemical Producers' Association in this endeavour.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures