

investigation, there may then be some hesitancy on the part of the experts and, consequently, there may be a requirement to contact additional back-up personnel. The need to brief the team, assemble equipment (see Section 3.0) and designate responsibilities to individual team members will all take a certain amount of time. Such an ad hoc approach will inevitably produce time lags. An optimistic assumption would be to expect that everything could be completed in a matter of days, certainly less than two weeks, provided the necessary supplies are stockpiled somewhere.

Of course, the above considerations are most relevant if there is a possibility of gaining access to the site where the use of chemical weapons is alleged to have taken place. If this is not the case, the other alternatives which may be available to the team are: access to victims and/or materiel samples in the rear area of the complainant country; similar access in a country neighbouring on the conflict; or access to victims and/or materiel samples in countries remote from the conflict. As mentioned earlier, the evidence obtained in such circumstances is also important, but the activities involved in investigations under such circumstances may not be accompanied by the same degree of urgency (and, of course, concern for the safety of the investigating team) as in the case of an on-site inspection.