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# The Disarmament Bulletin

A review of Canada's arms control and disarmament activities

Number 19 - Winter 1992/93

## Bulletin is Back



I am pleased to announce the resumption of publication of *The Disarmament Bulletin* by External Affairs and International Trade Canada. *The Bulletin* has been widely recognized, both by specialist audiences and the general public, as an information and research tool of high quality with respect to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

I warmly welcome the return of *The Disarmament Bulletin* and hope that readers will continue to find it of interest and value. I believe that *The Bulletin* will play an important role in fostering a better understanding of the issues we are now facing as we endeavour to make the international environment a safer one.

**The Honourable Barbara McDougall**  
Secretary of State for External Affairs

## Chemical Weapons Ban Agreed

After many years of negotiation, agreement on the text of a Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was reached at the Conference on Disarmament in September. Once implemented, the CWC will prohibit the development, production, stockpiling, retention and use of chemical weapons and their precursors.

Secretary of State for External Affairs Barbara McDougall welcomed the accord. "This Convention represents one of Canada's major arms control objectives," said Mrs. McDougall. "Ever since Canadian soldiers first came under gas attack in Ypres 77 years ago, Canada has advocated a total abolition of chemical weapons."

International discussions on a chemical weapons ban began in 1968, with formal negotiations underway since 1984. Canada has participated in the talks since their inception and has made a strong contribution to the Convention's verification provisions through, for example, the preparation of expert studies and the conduct of trial inspections. Although Canada would have preferred stricter verification procedures, it has accepted the agreement as the best text attainable.

In December, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution, co-sponsored by Canada, commending the Convention to Member States for signature. A formal signing ceremony will be held in Paris on January 13. Canada has committed to being an original signatory to the CWC. Once 50 countries have signed, a Preparatory Committee will convene to begin planning for the Convention's implementation, including establishment of the Hague-based Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which will verify compliance. The Convention will come into force 180 days after ratification by 65 countries, but

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