

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

As part of our effort to facilitate these most important negotiations, Canada has regularly assembled and made available to all of the delegations to this Conference compendiums of all relevant plenary statements and working papers. These, I hope, have proven to be of value as working tools in this highly complex negotiation. I am pleased to report today that compendiums comprising the documentation from the especially busy 1986 session are now available and will be distributed to all delegations in the very near future.

If I may interject a personal comment, a number of us have found it difficult to develop an overview of the negotiations in spite of the expertise of members of our respective delegations and in spite of the excellent work of the Chairman of the subsidiary body, and we hope that these compendiums will assist in the process of enabling delegations to develop an overview.

Canada's long-standing interest in the broad issues of verification is by now well known. In the context of chemical weapons, we have devoted special attention, and considerable research effort, to questions relating to the verification of allegations of chemical weapon use. Last year, I tabled in this forum a Handbook for the Investigation of Allegations of the Use of Chemical or Biological Weapons, which had earlier been presented to the United Nations Secretary-General. I am pleased to inform the Conference that we will be shortly submitting to the Conference on Disarmament a report entitled Verification: Development of a Portable Trichothecene Sensor Kit for the Detection of T-2 Mycotoxin in Human Blood Samples. It was conveyed to the United Nations Secretary-General on 20 May 1987. In his letter to His Excellency the Secretary-General, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, said the following:

"The recent confirmed use of chemical weapons, in violation of international law, underlines the need to add to the body of knowledge which will contribute to the efficacy of a future treaty banning chemical weapons altogether. Such a treaty will, of necessity, make provision for the verification of allegations of the use of these weapons, with a view to deterring their use".

In referring specifically to the portable sensor kit, Mr. Clark pointed out:

"This research project was undertaken as a case-study, to develop a better understanding of the technical problems associated with the provision of appropriate sensors to an investigating team. The speedy collection and subsequent analysis of samples pose many problems to an investigating team. These problems are compounded if the allegation relates to a 'novel' agent, that is, a chemical substance not previously used for or associated with hostile purposes".

The report which I will soon be submitting, while documenting two years of work, still leaves many questions unanswered. Nevertheless, we wish to share this work with other members of the international community who are also concerned with these matters.