

be much more effective means than now exist to bring pressure to bear on parties to cooperate in such an investigation.

In the case of an unfounded allegation, a prompt investigation would also be of considerable importance. The reason is that any time delay makes it much more difficult to conclude with a high degree of confidence that something did not happen. At best, one might only be able to say that the investigating team (and subsequent laboratory analysis) did not find any evidence to confirm scientifically that chemical or biological weapons had been used. (There may still be circumstantial or hearsay evidence such that the allegation may not be totally refuted either.) Such distinctions may be subtle, but their implications are not, in that any delay in investigating the incident may leave lingering doubts which continue to poison the international environment. Thus, there is an obvious connection between the promptness of the investigation and the effectiveness with which the investigating team can address the problem and arrive at scientific conclusions.

The ideal situation would be one whereby the investigating team could be on-site, where the incident is alleged to have taken place, within 24 hours. Clearly, there are very real and practical problems involved in translating the ideal into reality. For example, the information related to the attack must be transmitted from the site of occurrence to the appropriate authorities in capitals, through various levels of military and civilian bureaucracy. Then, after evaluating the situation, a decision must be taken to make a complaint to the appropriate international authority, conveying whatever information