

Excellency,

On September 25, 1985, I had the honour of addressing the 40th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, at which time I stated that Canada had devised its own Programme of Action for the latter half of the Second Disarmament Decade. At that time, I indicated that Canada would present to the United Nations the results of detailed, practical studies it has undertaken related to the investigation of allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

As you know, over the past few years Canada has submitted documentation to the United Nations that has had a bearing on specific allegations. In addition, Canada submitted a study and made a presentation to the Group of Consultant Experts appointed by you under General Assembly resolution 37/98D concerning provisional procedures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical or biological weapons. In accordance with that resolution, Canada also advised you of the names of scientific experts and laboratories upon which you could draw in the event of a requirement to investigate an allegation of the use of chemical or biological weapons. As you are fully aware, the use of such weapons would constitute a violation of either the 1925 Geneva Protocol or the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, or both. The international community ignores such acts at its peril.

Your initiatives to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons have been greatly appreciated in Canada, and have had our full support. If, regrettably, further investigative initiatives by you become necessary, you can count on Canada's continued support. It is, therefore, with particular pleasure that I am conveying to you, on behalf of the Government of Canada, the formal results of our work in the form of a Handbook for the Investigation of Allegations of the Use of Chemical or Biological Weapons.

This document constitutes a manual of procedures which would be useful to UN experts who may be called upon to investigate such an allegation. An impartial investigation would determine, to the extent possible, whether or not there are grounds to support the allegation. It is for this reason, we strongly believe, that a comprehensive and known set of procedures should exist to conduct a timely on-site investigation, a point which has been made many times in the past by the Experts appointed by you. This Handbook