
Chapter 1. Welcoming Remarks

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It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Department of External Affairs, to welcome you all to this wonderful part of Canada. Although I know that Harriet Critchley and her staff of the University of Calgary, in conjunction with the staff of the Verification Research Unit, have put together a very intense work schedule, I trust you will still have an opportunity to benefit from the great outdoors. Perhaps we can all take some inspiration from our surroundings as we contemplate matters related to peace and security.

To this gathering we all bring experience in public service, in organizational matters and in international affairs. It is fortunate, given the informal nature of much of the work to follow, that there is no need for me to dwell upon the reputations and accomplishments of our foreign guests — fortunate because that alone would have taken up all of the time available to me. It is worth mentioning one obvious point, however: we have not been brought together because we are all experts on the chemical weapons negotiations. While we certainly have among us a number of participants who can lay claim to such status, others are particularly knowledgeable about the International Atomic Energy Agency — the IAEA — and, more specifically, about the details of setting up and operating its Safeguards system. So, the purpose of this exercise is to engage in what may loosely be characterized as a little “lateral thinking”. One writer has said that:

Vertical thinking is digging the same hole deeper; lateral thinking is trying again elsewhere.

Our common task is to consider what lessons might be derived from the IAEA experience which could then be applied in an entirely different context, that of a future chemical weapons convention. Everyone here is knowledgeable about one or more aspects of the central theme of this workshop, and its organizers have striven to provide a logical framework for the distillation of many combined years of experience into perhaps a few salient lessons.

I mentioned a “logical framework” — in fact, logic has a lot to do with this exercise if we accept the view that:

The purpose of logic should not be so much to find the final conclusion, but to make sure that it is sound once it has been found.

