

INSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL ASPECTS

Gordon Vachon, of the Department of External Affairs of Canada, presented his analysis of some of the primary political issues which are hindering movement toward a CWC. He noted that the world has proof of CW proliferation from Iraqi use of the weapons in the Gulf War. There are other countries which are strongly suspected of having or pursuing a CW capability. The Final Declaration of the 1989 Paris Conference called upon all participants to ensure that no civilian chemicals are diverted for military purposes. (See Appendix VI.)

Vachon acknowledged that this is a very sensitive issue. On the one hand, governments want to ensure that there is no further proliferation of chemical weapons. On the other hand, governments do not want to inhibit normal international trade. The issue is difficult because governments have to rely on sources of intelligence that cannot be made public. At the same time, action must be taken. The 1984 Annual Report of the Secretary-General was a rallying point for many countries to impose controls on certain highly sought-after chemicals.

There is another question, said Vachon: How do we strike a balance between supporting the legitimate development of a chemical industry, and prohibiting the use of certain chemicals for military purposes. Many of the precursors are the same. (See Appendix II.)

Some Middle East nations link progress on the CWC with the elimination of nuclear weapons. They argue that chemical weapons are their only form of deterrent against other weapons of mass destruction. The CWC should not be held up, said Vachon, while we wait for progress in nuclear arms control. It is in the interests of all nations to complete a ban on chemical weapons as soon as possible.

Barbara Seiders emphasized the need to develop methods for effective verification -- for example, model inspections to monitor permitted activity in each country, and