

University of Calgary Workshop on Verification of a Chemical Weapons Convention

One of the key areas of discussion at the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament concerning a comprehensive chemical weapons treaty is how to verify effectively that parties live up to their obligations under an agreement. As was evident at the special Conference on chemical weapons, held in Paris January 7-11, 1989, recent events have heightened concerns about the proliferation of chemical weapons among states which previously did not possess them as well as about the use of these weapons.

Canada has long supported efforts to ban chemical weapons. We have worked hard in Geneva to contribute constructively to the present negotiations that have as their objective a treaty to completely eliminate these weapons.

In support of our delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, a major focus of Canadian research activities under the auspices of the Verification Research Programme is verification of a chemical weapons ban. Recently, the Strategic Studies Programme of the University of Calgary, with the sponsorship of the Verification Research Programme, hosted a workshop in Banff, Alberta on one approach to this complex question. This workshop drew together a small number of experts from the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, Holland and Sweden as well as from Canada.

The University of Calgary meeting sought to identify lessons for verifying a chemical weapons ban that might be learned from the experience of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). IAEA safeguards have been in operation for more than 20 years and represent one of the few working examples of an operating multilateral verification system. While IAEA safeguards apply to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, it has been widely believed that the techniques, management and institutional arrangements of Safeguards can provide a valuable model in the context of chemical weapons verification. The pur-



Participants at University of Calgary Workshop on IAEA Safeguards as a Model for Verification of a Chemical Weapons Convention, 21-24 October 1988.

pose of the workshop was to focus in detail on these lessons.

The model provided by the IAEA has been an interest of the Verification Research Programme for some time. In 1985, the Programme funded original research by Dr. James Keeley of the University of Calgary on this question. His report, which was recently published as the first issue of the *Arms Control Verification Occasional Papers*, entitled "International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards: Observations on Lessons for Verifying a Chemical Weapons Convention" formed a central element of the University of Calgary workshop discussions.

The meeting provided an invaluable forum for experts on chemical weapons negotiations to meet with and draw upon the experience of experts on IAEA safeguards. The discussions were wide-ranging as well as very frank. Political, organizational, administrative and technical dimensions of the subject were explored. In general, it was concluded

that the IAEA can provide significant and valuable insights with respect to chemical weapons verification. However, these lessons are, for the most part, ones of general approach not of detailed application. This finding is dictated by the significant differences that are inherent in the nuclear and chemical industries—for example, size, complexity, and so on—which make the transfer of the specifics of IAEA safeguard procedures to the chemical weapons environment very problematical. The workshop discussions, nevertheless, proved very fruitful and will undoubtedly contribute to further understanding of the complex issues surrounding chemical weapons verification, as well as lead to further research in this area. The Department of External Affairs intends to publish the proceedings of this workshop in the form of an occasional paper which will summarize its findings. These proceedings will also be shared with other countries at the Conference on Disarmament. ■