

Muthanna State Establishment now analyzed, the Special Commission has a very good understanding of Iraq's declared primary chemical weapons site. Furthermore, discussions on the destruction of chemical weapons and agents have resulted in a considerable improvement in technical understanding by both sides, particularly as regards the potential hazards involved in some operations and the technologies potentially available for implementing the various destruction processes. The chemical agent destruction process is likely to start early in 1992.

Ballistic missiles

By the end of 1991, UNSCOM inspection teams had supervised the destruction of 62 ballistic missiles, 18 fixed missile launch pads, 33 ballistic missile warheads, 127 missile storage support racks, a substantial amount of rocket fuel, an assembled 350 mm supergun, components of two 500 and two 1,000 mm superguns, and one ton of supergun propellant. The assembled supergun was destroyed by Iraqi engineers at its site in Iskandariyah, 50 kilometres south of Baghdad, under UN supervision in early December.

Conclusion

As UNSCOM and the IAEA confront the difficult issues likely to arise in connection with the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and the facilities for their production, and as the plans for ongoing monitoring and verification are put into effect, support of the Security Council, the Secretary General, the Secretariat and Member States of the United Nations will be essential.

Experience to date has shown that results can be achieved only when resolute stands are taken in response to Iraqi challenges to the implementation of the mandate of UNSCOM and the IAEA. Such resolute stands can be based only on the full support of the United Nations and its Member States in achieving all the basic objectives of Section C of Security Council Resolution 687.

Skies May Soon be Open

Negotiations on an Open Skies agreement, which resumed this past fall in Vienna among the members of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact, appear to be overcoming difficulties encountered in previous rounds of talks. Negotiators believe an agreement could be reached early in 1992. Among factors that could complicate the final stages are uncertainty over arrangements affecting territory of the former USSR and agreement on management arrangements for aircraft and data.

An Open Skies agreement would aim to build confidence by providing for unarmed, short-notice surveillance flights of signatory countries. During earlier rounds of negotiation — the first held in Ottawa in February 1990 and the second in Budapest in April-May of that year — the NATO participants pressed for overflights to be permitted under a regime that was as open as possible. That would entail use of aircraft belonging to the overflying country, use of sophisticated "all-weather" sensors, no restrictions on

flight plans except for air safety reasons, and a relatively large quota of overflights.

The USSR, with some support from other East European participants, argued for inspected countries having the right to require use of their own aircraft and to stipulate certain areas as being permanently out of bounds, for monitoring equipment to be limited, and for the data from each overflight to form part of a universally-available pool of information. The USSR also argued for very restrictive limits on the number and duration of flights.

The current round of negotiations was able to get under way following indications that the USSR would be willing to accept some non-optical sensors on board inspection aircraft, would open all its territory to overflights, and would accept a substantially larger quota of overflights. For their part, the Western allies indicated a willingness to accept the use of aircraft from the inspected country. Overflying aircraft, from whichever country, would operate using



Canadian aircraft commander Capt. John Latulippe (left) speaking with an officer of the Hungarian Air Force during Canada's trial Open Skies overflight of Hungary in January 1990. As this Bulletin went to press, a reciprocal Hungarian trial overflight of Canada was scheduled to take place January 13 to 18.