

Executive Summary

The final report of the United Nations Group of Consultant Experts, established in pursuance of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 37/98D, indirectly identified the need for the development of a handbook for the use of experts who may be called upon to investigate allegations of the use of chemical or biological weapons. This prompted a study on a cooperative basis between the University of Saskatchewan and the Department of External Affairs, the product of which is a first attempt at the development of such a handbook. The study sought to evaluate the requirements associated with an investigation incorporating an on-the-spot analytical capability, and these requirements are reflected herein.

This Handbook does not deal with the procedures and criteria leading to the initiation of an investigation, but rather it provides various checklists and views on procedures for the consideration of an investigating team as it prepares to implement a decision to conduct an investigation. No particular scenario has been specified of circumstances leading to or governing the investigation, as these could be many and varied. Instead, the text implicitly addresses what would likely be the most difficult situation, that of an investigation in a remote area. It bears mentioning that a prompt response on the part of the international authority will be crucial to any attempt to confirm or to refute an allegation of the use of chemical or biological weapons.

Resources mentioned (personnel, equipment and supplies) are characteristic of what would amount to a scientific expedition carried out under stressful and possibly dangerous conditions.

The Handbook assumes that the investigating team, in the course of one investigation, should be equipped to inspect two sites where