

By 1983, members of the working group had submitted to the Secretary-General their guidelines and procedures for the investigation of allegations of CW use. In 1984, the Secretary-General began sending investigative teams to the site of the Gulf War, where there had been repeated allegations of CW use. Nine such teams were sent to the region. Although the Secretary-General continued to act under his own authority, from the third mission on, said Nordenfelt, the investigative teams of qualified experts were in fact using the guidelines and procedures put forward by the Secretary-General's working group.

Those investigations established that chemical weapons had been used in the Gulf War. The investigative team, said Nordenfelt, was a bit timid about identifying the user, but eventually it concluded that Iraq had used CW against Iranian soldiers and civilians. In 1984, the Security Council limited itself to a simple statement by the president condemning the use of CW in the Gulf War.

Ronald Sutherland, of the University of Saskatchewan, discussed the institutional machinery for CWC verification. He focused on the difficult issue of monitoring the civilian chemical industry. Any state party can do what it wishes with toxic chemicals, as long as those chemicals and their precursors are not used for making chemical weapons. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the industry is at different levels of development in different areas of the globe. Mature industries are concerned about losing trade secrets in the process of international verification. The Third World nations fear that their fledgling industries will be stunted.

Over the last few years, industry experts, representing all of the world's major chemical manufacturers, have been invited to Geneva to participate in discussions. Data about plant capacities, processes, quantities, and the like are considered by them to be intellectual property. Any loss of such information could have catastrophic consequences. Industry representatives say that they would not trust an international organization to inspect their facilities and keep the information secret.