

2. Chemical and Biological Weapons

In an opening speech to the First Committee at the United Nations, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, Peggy Mason welcomed the agreement between the US and the Soviet Union, achieved in June 1990, but noted that there was still a long way to go to achieve a comprehensive chemical weapons ban.⁵

A three-part resolution on chemical and biological weapons was adopted by consensus at the UN General Assembly. Resolution 45/57A urged the CD and all states to work towards completing the chemical weapons convention. Resolution 45/57B relates to preparations for the BWC review conference and calls on states which have not ratified or acceded to the convention to do so. Resolution 45/57C calls on all states to maintain strict adherence to the Geneva Protocol and endorses the Secretary-General's role in investigating any allegations of chemical weapons use.⁶

In recent years, Canada has undertaken a number of working papers, meetings and experiments to investigate verification issues relating to the chemical weapons convention. In August, Canada reported to the CD on a trial inspection it had carried out in July at the Merck Frosst Canada Inc. plant in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, to investigate the value and implications of procedures relating to chemical industries.⁷ Also in August, the Canadian delegation submitted a study on the size and costs of the international inspectorate that would be necessary to implement the convention.⁸

From 25 to 28 November 1990, a joint Canada-Netherlands trial challenge inspection was carried out in a Canadian Forces Base Lahr in Germany. One of the conclusions of the experiment was that sensitive information could be protected while providing inspectors with sufficient access to facilities to enable them to successfully complete their tasks.⁹

At a plenary session of the CD in August 1990, Canada's Ambassador to the negotiations, Mr. Gerald Shannon, outlined Canada's views. Ambassador Shannon stated that Canada's goal remains a "global, comprehensive, and effectively verifiable" convention. However, he expressed disappointment at the lack of progress achieved during the summer and noted that a number of major

⁵Ambassador Peggy Mason. "Canadian Statement to the First Committee," *Disarmament Bulletin* 15, Winter 1990/91: 16-18.

⁶United Nations. *Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons*. Resolution 45/57, 4 December 1990.

⁷Department of External Affairs. "Preparing for a Ban on Chemical Weapons," *The Disarmament Bulletin*, no. 14, Fall 1990: 23-24.

⁸Canada. *The Chemical Weapons Convention and the International Inspectorate: A Quantitative Study*. Ottawa: August 1991.

⁹Canada. CD/1052, 31 January 1991. Also: Department of External Affairs. "Canada-Netherlands Trial CW Inspection: Exercise ACID BREW," *The Disarmament Bulletin*, no. 15, Winter 1990/91: 21.