

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

we can do that is likely to assist the United Nations in its efforts to prevent the use of chemical weapons in the present conflict. In our view, only concerted efforts at the political level can be effective in ensuring that all the signatories of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 abide by their deliberations and obligations. Otherwise, if the Protocol is irreparably weakened after 60 years of general international respect, this may lead, in the future, to the world facing the spectre of the threat of biological weapons". We can therefore conclude that there is no technical obstacle to a political decision.

The Security Council, in response to this important report, issued a statement on 14 May 1987 which contained nothing more than the statement of 21 March 1986. The Council knew well that the previous statements not only did not prevent Iraq from repeating such barbaric acts but, rather, encouraged Iraq to violate the Protocol more flagrantly and freely. In fact, following the 1986 statement, Iraq celebrated 1987 by generalizing the use of chemical weapons to civilians. The toothless statement of 14 May 1987 proved that the Security Council substantially lacks the capability for "concerted efforts at the political level", despite the open request of the Secretary-General. And the prevailing political atmosphere has prevented the Council from taking any fundamental position, let alone any just decision. We warned the international community at the time that such compromising and weak moves would embolden Iraq to intensify its crimes and we desperately regret that it so happened.

The Iraqi chemical attack on the city of Sardasht was without precedent in the history of contemporary wars. The name of Sardasht should castigate the consciousness of mankind along with the names of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the first city in history whose inhabitants were massacred by poisonous gases. Encyclopedias and history books should record the name of this innocent city as a shame on humanity. Yet the Security Council remained motionless and submissive and, even worse than that, discouraged the Secretary-General from any future action or initiative.

The Iraqi régime, in a bid to justify its crimes, has announced that it will halt its violation of international law only if the war is ended. Ironically enough, the United States, which had previously condemned the use of chemical weapons by Iraq, has now gone so far in supporting Iraq that it even prevents the Council from discussing the subject and receiving the technical report on the genocide of the people of Sardasht. In other words, the United States is condoning deployment of chemical weapons in the war and justifies its control only in peace time. The countries having clear stances on the issue in the past are now following the United States policy, due to their bilateral political considerations.

While the NATO alliance considers a nuclear attack in retaliation to a chemical assault on cities possible, how can this indifference vis-à-vis the Sardasht catastrophe be interpreted? Do not claim that the Council has not ignored the fact and has condemned the use of poisonous gases in its latest resolution. This has been the third consecutive year that such a showcase position has been repeated while the Iraqi crimes are constantly increasing.