

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

the Conference. The continued and wide-scale use of chemical and toxic weapons by Iraq at a time when negotiations on a new convention on chemical weapons are under way has drawn our attention to the items being discussed in this Conference.

You should recently have been informed about the terrifying reports coming from the Iranian city of Sardasht, which seem to have numbed us with their repetition. The residential areas in this city were subjected to the most brutal chemical bombardments, causing the death of hundreds of innocent people. This was not the first time that Iran was subjected to chemical weapons attack and it was not the first time that civilian areas and residential quarters were targets of chemical assault. But this was the first time that a city in its totality was poisoned by the Iraqi forces. The use of chemical arms was so vast that even several days later, when the United Nations specialists despatched to the area arrived in the city, the afflicted areas were still highly contaminated. A number of wounded inhabitants are still in European hospitals. I strongly urge you who are directly involved in important negotiations on the new chemical weapons convention to visit these patients and see for yourselves the dreadful effects of these destructive weapons. Among the injured there are individuals who were witnesses to the loss of members of their families while they themselves were chemically afflicted. I am confident that observing such crimes will contribute to the redoubling of your efforts and the reaching of definite and final agreement on a chemical weapons convention.

Despite achievements being made in these talks which have made an agreement closer at hand, the non-compliance with the present instruments reveals grim prospects for the future. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 may be more primitive than the present convention and of less complexity than the present deliberations. The undertakings of countries have, however, given sufficient strength to the Protocol. In the meantime, it has not set concrete measures for verification, compliance or use, which constitute the main part of the new convention. Yet the confirmed use of chemical weapons by Iraq shows vividly that verification can be successfully conducted. But, in the absence of firm political will, prevention of the use of chemical weapons -- which is definitely less complex than prevention of production, development and stockpiling of these weapons -- will not be possible.

We are formulating and preparing a convention in the Conference whose application will in the end depend on the activities of other organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It is, therefore, proper to pose the question whether the Council has been able to reflect the necessary capability and political will vis-à-vis the confirmed reports of the use of chemical weapons. The answer is axiomatic. If the Security Council has been faced with political considerations as regards the repeated violation of the Geneva Protocol by Iraq and has not been able to take effective measures, it is evident that no decisive decision can be expected of this body as regards assuring compliance with the provisions of the new convention.

In the latest report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council, it is declared that "technically there is little more that