

Clearly, not only must production and use of those weapons be exposed to punitive action, but more importantly, production and transfer of chemical and nerve agents must be banned outright and unconditionally. Ultimately, all chemical weapons must be destroyed under controlled, easily verifiable conditions.

Such a ban must apply to all countries, particularly those powers which still possess large stockpiles of these weapons in their arsenals. These powers have not only continued to produce chemical weapons, but have provided the necessary technology to some Third World countries, and particularly in the volatile Middle East region. Iraq is a case in point. But because the two largest powers continue to maintain these weapons, they constitute the primary danger.

We must learn from our misfortunes, and turn our tragedy into a lesson for humanity. Weapons like this must never again be used in any circumstance, anywhere. Their continued existence poses a grave threat to international peace. They must be destroyed unconditionally, particularly by the great powers.

Chemical weapons should be followed up seriously by the Geneva disarmament conference, and the full weight of international opinion must be focused on efforts to end this menace to humanity. A new convention, to complete the 1925 Geneva Protocol, must be drawn up. This convention must contain specific measures, and it must be ratified by the big powers. The United Nations and other international bodies should be given the necessary executive power to deal with any use of such weapons. Political considerations cannot become an excuse for any government to ignore its duty.

The experience of the last ten years has shown that chemical weapons are the main threat to world peace, even more than nuclear weapons, because they can be produced so cheaply and easily. This is just a simple reason. You can imagine the others yourself. As members of the scientific, medical and particularly the chemistry communities, you know better than I the continual suffering chemical warfare victims will have to endure all their lives.

Today, one year after the horror of Halabja, it is time to mark this tragic anniversary. Iran's Foreign Minister, Dr. Velayati, has stated that it would be appropriate to commemorate the destruction of an entire town by chemical weapons by declaring 18 March as an international day marking mankind's desire to rid the world of such weapons once and for all.

Some of you are chemical and biological scientists, and, as such, more knowledgeable about chemical and biological weapons. Perhaps one of the things chemical scientists could do would be to turn their efforts to creating better ways of nullifying these weapons, and to use all the facilities of chemistry and biology departments of universities to try to help the victims.

Those of you who work for governments can also contribute, by helping draft policies aimed at eliminating the chemical warfare threat. No greater contribution to peace could