

UNCLASSIFIED  
NON CLASSIFIE

4

**CONFERENCE OF EXPERTS ON THE USE OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT AS A TOOL OF CONVENTIONAL WARFARE**

OTTAWA, 9-12 JULY, 1991

**CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUSIONS**

Dept. of Foreign Affairs  
Min. des Affaires étrangères

AOUT 24 2009

Return to Departmental Library  
Retourner à la bibliothèque du Ministère

Motivated by the serious environmental consequences of the recent conflict in the Gulf area, The Conference of Experts on the Use of the Environment as a Tool of Conventional Warfare was convened by the Government of Canada and the Secretary General of the United Nations.

The object of the Conference was to provide a single forum in which experts in the fields of international environmental law and environmental sciences, and the laws of war, could debate the existing international law on the relationship of war and the environment. Based on the results of their analysis of the existing state of the law, it was hoped that the experts would be able to suggest ways to improve its effectiveness and implementation.

In the opinion of the Chairman, these objectives have been well and truly met. Without exception, the experts present, who participated in their personal capacities, provided thoughtful and articulate contributions to the discussions.

1. Participants heard presentations on the environmental effects of the Gulf War, the historical development of the international law on the environment and on armed conflict, and the applicability of existing law to incidents of the type that occurred during the war.

2. Participants reviewed existing law and other instruments that could be relevant to the protection of the environment during armed conflict.

3. The Conference noted the grave damage resulting from Iraqi actions during the Gulf War, for example, in setting oil fires and in deliberately releasing oil in the Gulf. There was a shared view that important provisions of customary and conventional law had been seriously violated.

4. Participants noted United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 adopted on April 3, 1991, which reaffirmed that Iraq was liable under international law to compensate for any environmental damage and the depletion of natural resources.

5. There was a shared view that wanton destruction of the environment with no legitimate military objective is clearly contrary to existing international law.

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT  
CANADA

PEV 20 1994