

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

that the lack of political will by some States shown in the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a more effective resolution in this connection, will raise doubts regarding the initiatives put forward by both blocs. Here I would like to say that the unilateral and multilateral position of all countries vis-à-vis the use of chemical weapons should once and for all remain independent from bilateral concerns of all countries. I would like to express our appreciation to those members of the Conference who have addressed and expressed concerns on the continuation and intensification of the use of chemical warfare by Iraq during the past CD sessions. Meanwhile we cannot ignore the fact that a few States, despite their international responsibilities, have failed to present any position in this connection.

This cannot be interpreted as anything other than deliberately overlooking the main issues of the work of this Conference at the expense of our common goals. I hope that this regretful practice will not be continued in this forum, and that all members will bear in mind that the world community seizes every opportunity to put our seriousness at test. Here I would like to bring to your attention that the last chemical weapons were used on 19 March 1987 and I would like to repeat, on 19 March 1987, and as a result great damage was inflicted. I hope that this time all members of this Conference will take clear positions against the continuation of such crimes.

Fourthly, the unprecedented level of the use of chemical warfare in recent years has proved beyond doubt that the effective implementation of the international convention on the production, use, stockpiling, transfer and development of chemical weapons is an urgent imperative. Any further postponement of the submission of the draft to the General Assembly under whatever pretext is not acceptable. However, we share the views expressed by those States which attach great importance to the issue of compliance. While an international verification and on-site inspection system is an undeniable necessity, the ultimate confidence in the convention would not be provided unless international punitive measures against any serious and deliberate violations of the convention would also be provided.

The Iraqi practice must always be kept in mind. The United Nations expert teams dispatched to our country to verify the use of chemical weapons have on numerous occasions come out with clear verified cases. At this point we would like to express our appreciation to those States which have, by convening educative international gatherings, enhanced public awareness about the inhuman effects of the use of these weapons.

Such endeavours will undoubtedly have substantial positive effects. Efforts by some of the Nordic countries are also impressive. Research programmes on verification of the implications of chemical weapons are still going on and we are awaiting the results. Similarly, research on the effects of the deployment of chemical weapons on the environment as well as remedies for chemically afflicted people and other research efforts are noteworthy.