

(Mr. Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

between Iran and Iraq, the Paris Conference was announced. But in a bid to pre-empt any action against the culprit, the Iraqi Foreign Minister in an interview with a Kuwaiti paper on the eve of the Conference threatened that he would reveal the names of European suppliers of chemical agents and technology to Iraq, if those countries persisted in their pressure against Iraq. The blackmail was so effective that the Conference did not even name the culprit. It is, therefore, not surprising to see that although the Paris Conference called on the Conference on Disarmament to redouble its efforts for the speedy conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons, no agreement has been reached in CD even for minor improvements such as changing the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee to add "prohibition of use" in the title of the convention being negotiated.

What is really needed for the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive, global and effectively verifiable convention is a strong political will by all parties. Our collective efforts should be directed towards total and absolute elimination of chemical weapons through the early conclusion of a convention enjoying universal adherence. Interim measures such as non-proliferation of chemical weapons will not serve the objective of abolishing chemical weapons and preventing their use. In this connection, the order of destruction envisaged in the convention should include qualitative and quantitative aspects of these weapons. The order of destruction should give priority to destruction of the most lethal ones such as nerve gas, and not start with mustard gas, which because of its obsolescence will have to be destroyed sooner or later. The big Powers should prove their genuine will by acting indiscriminately in this direction. The Canberra Conference should also refrain from acting towards non-proliferation of chemical weapons, since that will adversely affect the work of our Conference in Geneva. In order to ensure the universality of the convention, it is necessary to provide incentives, and in this respect article 10 plays a key role. Assistance to victims of chemical weapons should be automatic and mandatory, because any delay in providing assistance such as antidotes, medical care and first aid would cost human lives. Another area which still needs to be specified is punitive measures against States parties which may breach the convention.