

Mr. SHAHABI SIRJANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran hopes to have the opportunity to express its congratulations fully at a more suitable moment.

My delegation deems it necessary to draw the attention of the respected members of the Conference to the profoundly regrettable news that yesterday, 13 March 1985, Iran was again subjected to the use of chemical weapons.

Yesterday's use of chemical weapons on the part of Iraq was to be foreseen in view of its lack of response to the humanitarian appeal of 29 June 1984 of the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the use of chemical weapons should be discontinued; this appeal was addressed to Iraq and the Islamic Republic (document S/16663).

Exactly one year ago yesterday, on 13 March 1984, the United Nations Secretary-General's team of experts arrived in Tehran to investigate the use of chemical weapons against the Islamic Republic. During the course of its one-week investigation of the Iran-Iraq war front, the team came to the unanimous conclusion that chemical weapons were in fact used against Iran (document S/16433 of 26 March 1984).

In view of this coincidence in time, are we not to consider that yesterday's use of chemical weapons by Iraq was a wilful show of disrespect for the Secretary-General's humanitarian efforts, the serious concern of the international community, the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and the serious endeavours of this Conference towards the total elimination of chemical weapons?

In the course of the past 12 months, since 13 March 1984, the date of the arrival of the United Nations team of experts in Iran to investigate the use of chemical weapons, up to the present, Iraq has resorted to the use of chemical weapons on 26 further occasions.

During the period beginning 9 August 1984 up to the day before yesterday, 12 March 1985, Iraq had not resorted to the use of chemical weapons. However, yesterday's use of chemical weapons, if not repressed by the concerned organs and the international community as a whole, will foreshadow a new phase of this type of warfare, with a risk of escalation to the level of last year's unprecedented peak.

Mr. President, I would like to express the request of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Governments which can provide assistance to victims of the use of chemical weapons, to declare their willingness to do so in respect of yesterday's victims. It is hoped that Governments members of the Conference on Disarmament will respond positively to this humanitarian appeal in view of their specialized knowledge of this subject.