



No. 208

September 26, 1988.

USA INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL
PROHIBITION AGAINST CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, welcomed today President Reagan's call upon signatories of the 1925 Geneva Protocol on chemical weapons, and other concerned states, to convene a conference to consider actions which might be taken to reverse the erosion of international prohibitions on the use of these weapons.

Mr. Clark noted that Canada was profoundly disturbed by the recent use of chemical weapons in the Iran/Iraq war, and repeatedly condemned such actions. The convening of an international conference to strengthen prohibition against chemical weapons use would be a positive move in strengthening the effectiveness of the Geneva protocol.

Mr. Clark expressed the hope that such an international conference might provide an impetus to broader negotiations on chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. There Canada is actively participating with other nations in an effort to reach a comprehensive, global and verifiable ban on the production, possession and use of chemical weapons. The complete elimination of chemical weapons remains Canada's goal.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures