

identification of Iraq as the perpetrator in 1986, and the recent disclosure by US State Department officials that Iran had the capability to use chemical weapons, lent urgency to the work in the Ad Hoc Committee. In March 1984, the Secretary-General's investigative team concluded that chemical weapons had been used "on many occasions."<sup>8</sup> The Ambassador also voiced Canadian "readiness in principle to accept and apply" the verification proposals tabled in the US draft treaty of 1984. He called for "concrete, substantive alternative comprehensive proposals" from those who criticized the US suggestions. Turning to the "interim steps" involving possible multilateral agreement on the non-transfer of chemical weapons suggested by General Secretary Gorbachev, Beesley agreed with the US response. He noted that it would be of "limited utility" to have "an effective bilateral convention which is not a comprehensive convention in both senses in extending to all the main issues under negotiation and comprising a genuine non-proliferation convention."

The Ambassador stated that he was "greatly encouraged" by the recent statement by Mikhail Gorbachev (15 January 1986) which promised "strict control including international on-site inspection" for the destruction of production facilities, chemical weapons stockpiles and their industrial base, and invited the Soviet delegation to the CD to "elaborate on its precise meaning".<sup>9</sup>

In March 1986, a further report from the Secretary-General confirmed the use of chemical weapons by Iraq in response to Iranian offensive that carried Iranian forces into Iraqi territory. The principal agent used was mustard gas, although there was also evidence of the use of nerve gas. On 21 March 1986, the Security Council of the UN issued a strong condemnation of the continued use of chemical weapons in violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and demanded that the Protocol be strictly observed.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> "Chemical Weapons-Conference on Disarmament", The Arms Control Reporter-A Chronicle of Treaties, Negotiations and Proposals, Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, 1984, pp. 704.A.1-74.D.58.

<sup>9</sup> Statement to CD 4 February 1986.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Office at Geneva, Press Release DC/1376, 25 March 1986, p.5.