

(Mr. Shahabi Sirjani, Islamic Republic of Iran)

In my last intervention, on 14 March 1985, I drew the attention of the distinguished members and observers in the Conference to another escalation in the use of chemical weapons by Iraq on the war front. On that occasion I presented the request of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to all governments, and particularly to those present in this Conference, who can provide assistance to victims of the use of chemical weapons, to declare their willingness to do so in respect of the victims of such recent use. Fortunately, the request of my Government has been met in a manner deserving warm appreciation and today more than 30 Iranian victims of the use of chemical weapons are under treatment in a number of European countries. In this regard, our special thanks go to the Governments of Austria, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom, who have accepted a large number of the victims.

I should also thank a number of governments who have clearly and strongly condemned the use of chemical weapons by Iraq in the past few days and today. However, it is regrettable that in the course of the past few days two of the victims of chemical weapons have died due to the extreme severity of their conditions, and one more is under intensive care in a hospital in Europe.

The examination of the victims and the post mortem examinations of the dead in European hospitals have made very clear indications of the extensive use of highly lethal chemical agents, including the blistering agent known as mustard gas, against Iranian forces.

In respect of the recent escalation in the use of chemical weapons and other violations of international agreements by Iraq, the Secretary-General of the United Nations made a statement early this week and I would refer to the relevant part of it, which states that the Secretary-General is dismayed that a moratorium on attacks on purely civilian areas has not been observed, that attacks on unarmed merchant shipping persist and that international civil aviation in the area is under threat. He strongly urges both sides to put an end to such action.

The Secretary-General abhors in particular the use of chemical weapons in the course of these hostilities. Information emanating from medical sources in Vienna and London indicate that such use has recurred. As he had stated on previous occasions, the Secretary-General condemned the use of chemical weapons wherever and whenever this may occur. The appeal that he issued to ensure the strict observance of the Geneva Protocol still stands.

It is our desire and hope that adoption of appropriate positions and measures on the part of those Governments who have genuine and scrupulous support for the maintenance and preservation of the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons in war would diminish and remove further gross violations of the Protocol to the benefit of all mankind.