



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SIX HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 24 February 1986, at 5.30 p.m.

President: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

Members:

Australia	Mr. WOOLCOTT
Bulgaria	Mr. GARVALOV
China	Mr. LIANG Yufan
Denmark	Mr. BIERRING
France	Mr. de KEMOULARIA
Ghana	Mr. DUMEVI
Madagascar	Mr. RABETAFIKA
Thailand	Mr. KASEMSRI
Trinidad and Tobago	Mr. MOHAMMED
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. SAFRONCHUK
United Arab Emirates	Mr. AL-SHAALI
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John THOMSON
United States of America	Mr. OKUN
Venezuela	Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before the Council adopts the agenda for today's meeting, I wish to inform members that some delegations have conveyed to me their feelings about certain terms that were used in the Council. I shall call on any of those delegations that wish to speak.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): At the end of our last meeting, some shocking words were spoken that called into question the Security Council's authority and reputation. The Council cannot accept a situation in which representatives of Member States speak in a way that contradicts the commitments their Governments fully and freely undertook in adhering to the United Nations Charter.

Thus, it appears to me useful to recall that, under Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of our rules of procedure, it is by invitation of the Security Council that any Member of the United Nations that is not a member of the Council may participate, without the right to vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Council. It would be well if those who have benefited from that opportunity and who, by their words, have abused it were to keep that fact in mind.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): I associate myself and my delegation with what the representative of France has just said. We hear many violent speeches when the Council meets. Some of them are strong, but are within the bounds of propriety. Others - and I include the speech to which the representative of France referred - are, I think, beyond the bounds of propriety. That is irrespective of what political view is being put forward; it is the choice of words, the way in which the Council is treated.

I do not pretend that the Council is a court of law, but a court of law is protected by rules about contempt of court. A parliament is protected by rules about contempt of parliament. And this Council, I submit, should build up a body of practice which protects it against contempt of Council.

As the central body in the eyes of the world dealing with great international issues of peace and security, we should insist, whatever the political problems before us, that those problems should be dealt with in a mannerly, orderly and respectful way.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the remarks made by the representatives of France and the United Kingdom. We have already spoken on the subject, during the debate last week, and I would today draw attention to that statement and reinforce it.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Council will take note of those statements.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

LETTER DATED 12 FEBRUARY 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17821)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In accordance with decisions taken at previous meetings, I invite the representative of Iraq to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Yemen to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kittani (Iraq) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Al-Sabbagh (Bahrain), Mr. Badawi (Egypt), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Al-Shahine (Kuwait), Mr. Azzarouk (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Alaoui (Morocco), Mr. Al-Ansi (Oman), Mr. Massoud (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Karoui (Tunisia) and Mr. Al-Eryani (Yemen) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Security Council will now resume consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/17859, containing the text of a draft resolution drawn up during consultations of the Council.

I wish to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents:

(The President)

S/17853: Letter dated 20 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General;

S/17855: Letter dated 20 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council;

S/17856: Letter dated 20 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General;

S/17857: Letter dated 20 February 1986 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General;

S/17858: Letter dated 20 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and

S/17861: Letter dated 21 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): The Security Council is meeting anew to consider the conflict between Iran and Iraq, which has long been a source of concern to the Council. It is with dismay that we note the continuation of the war between two Muslim neighbours, despite the many great efforts at mediation made in order to settle it, particularly those of the Secretary-General, the Security Council, whose efforts include statements and resolutions, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Gulf Co-operation Council. Unfortunately, all those efforts have failed to break the deadlock.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

It is with grave concern that we note the international community's inability to produce a formula with which to bring the two parties to the conflict to the negotiating table, on the basis of the principles of international law, the United Nations Charter, reciprocal respect for the sovereignty of other States over their territories and the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other States.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab
Emirates)

Our view has always been that this destructive war drains the energies of the two countries and peoples. It is a war waged at the expense of resources which otherwise could have been devoted to development. We have always believed that it would have been possible to save the lives of thousands of people as well as the hundreds of billions of dollars squandered by this war.

The stirring-up of enmity and hatred and the continuing enmity and hatred between two Muslim neighbours reflect badly on the just causes for which they both struggle. They are leading to dire consequences for the historical relations between those two countries, relations of brotherhood laid down by Islam, and they also cast ominous shadows over the region to which they both belong.

In saying this, we realize that some circles continue to exploit this dispute for their own interests. The position of my country from the very outset has been that the continuation of this war is harmful to peace and security in the region, is a threat to its people and is a factor that encourages greedy foreign Powers to intervene in the internal affairs of the region.

Proceeding from that position, my country joined in the collective efforts that have been exerted. We also undertook initiatives with the two countries in an attempt to reach a peaceful settlement of the dispute. We are duty-bound to place on record here that brotherly Iraq has always responded favourably to efforts for a peaceful settlement. It has shown a clear desire to co-operate with the mediation initiatives. However, that stand by Iraq alone has not been sufficient to ensure success. It is essential for the Islamic Republic of Iran to co-operate with these initiatives in order to put an end to this war of destruction.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

We continue to hope that Iran will be able to overcome the obstacles that prevent it from joining the peace process. We continue to hope that Iran will take a positive decision as an expression of its desire to put an end to the continuing deterioration of the situation.

The latest developments resulting from the new Iranian offensive aimed at occupying a part of Iraqi territory add new complications to those that already exist. They make it most improbable for a peaceful settlement of this war to be reached, and pose grave dangers to the region as a whole, dangers the consequences of which will be very difficult to avoid in the near future.

Proceeding from its commitment to the United Nations Charter and its resolutions, from its commitment to the rules of law governing relations among States as well as to its Pan-Arab commitments, my country rejects any justifications or pretexts for the occupation of any Arab territories. We consider that occupation to be a threat to Pan-Arab security and to world peace.

Hence we believe that efforts must be undertaken to reach a radical solution to this problem. It is not sufficient to stop at partial solutions. Experience has indeed shown that such partial solutions are unable to lay the sound basis necessary for a just and comprehensive peaceful settlement.

By its very responsibilities set forth in the United Nations Charter, the Security Council is called upon to make every possible effort in order to lay down the basic rules necessary for a peaceful settlement. In this connection, we need the efforts of all Member States in order to build the framework for a just and comprehensive peaceful settlement of the conflict in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. We must call on the parties concerned to respect that framework and to commit themselves to it.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab
Emirates)

In this context, we applaud Iraq's co-operation with the Security Council during these deliberations. We had hoped that Iran would also have been able to participate in the Council's deliberations. We are convinced that had Iran participated the Security Council would have been able to assist in reaching the desired settlement.

Despite the fact that the draft resolution before the Security Council does not reflect all the elements we had sought in order to set up an integrated framework to stem the haemorrhage that is taking place, we consider that this draft resolution is an important step in that direction.

The deliberations undertaken by the Security Council underscore, on the one hand, the dangers implicit in this war for peace and security, and, on the other hand, the importance attached to this war by the international community. This raises our hopes for the future with respect to the possibilities available for restoring peace in a region that has long undergone much suffering and destruction.

My delegation will not cease in its efforts towards achieving that noble objective.

Mr. KASEMSRI (Thailand): My delegation is deeply concerned at the prolongation of the armed hostilities between Iran and Iraq, both of which maintain good relations with Thailand. It pains us to see the two neighbouring countries at war for already over five years. Both countries are cradles of ancient civilization, and both peoples are dynamic and capable of great achievements for their own well-being as well as for the benefit of their important region. The war between them has caused a terrible carnage and enormous waste. It has heightened tensions and destabilized that important part of the world, and it could endanger international peace and security.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, in his statement before the Council, told us that:

"Tens of thousands of victims of that conflict have so far fallen on each side It is no exaggeration to say that this conflagration has also laid waste innumerable economic infrastructures, installations and production sources ... and incalculable resources ... badly needed for development purposes." (S/PV.2663, p. 7)

The latest developments indicate a serious aggravation of the situation. That is why my delegation deems it necessary for the Council to be once again seized of the matter. Our only regret is that the absence of one of the parties to the conflict, namely, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in this debate has deprived the Council of the opportunity to hear the views of both sides.

My delegation appreciates the position of Iran on this point, but believes that the lapse of time has rendered it difficult for the Council to modify its past actions. We also believe that the Council intends to act with impartiality on the present situation with due regard to its implications on international peace and security.

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

Despite the regrettable absence of one party, the Council still has certain duties and obligations under the United Nations Charter with respect to the situation. Moreover, the statements we have heard in this Chamber cannot be overlooked. From all accounts, the Iranian incursion and occupation of Iraqi territory in the present offensive has been confirmed and the war is being fought with increasing ferocity.

Thailand deeply regrets that the war, initiated by one side and continued by the other, is incurring enormous sacrifices for both parties. It has been going on for almost six years, and the prospect of either side winning it is decidedly uncertain. Now the war is entering a new phase, with serious security implications for the Gulf States and further allegations of the use of chemical weapons. The Council is obliged once again to consider ways and means of bringing about a cessation of hostilities. To really achieve that, the co-operation of both parties to the conflict is indeed essential. As we are all aware, Iran's absence from the Council table makes this task most difficult. However, the latest communication from the Iranian Foreign Minister indicates that the eight points proposed by the Secretary-General continue to be a possible basis for agreement, and it should be recalled that the first of those points reads:

"... cessation of hostilities is a priority which will end the conflict under a certain timetable".

The Security Council itself has adopted several resolutions and decisions which, despite whatever shortcomings, still offer a reasonable basis for peaceful settlement. The resolutions have called upon both parties to refrain immediately from any further use of force; to settle their dispute by peaceful means, in conformity with principles of justice and international law; and urged them to accept any appropriate offer of mediation or conciliation or to resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means of their own choice. It should be

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

recalled that, as early as 22 September 1980, the United Nations Secretary-General addressed to them an offer of his good offices, which was endorsed by the Council. The resolutions have further called for a cease-fire and the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized boundaries, and urged that the mediation efforts be continued in a co-ordinated manner through the Secretary-General with a view to achieving a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement, acceptable to both sides, of all outstanding issues.

While the circumstances of their adoption have created difficulty for some of us, in large measure the contents of those resolutions state principles and suggest modalities which have intrinsic validity and value in the context of the Council's performance of its functions; furthermore, they have a significant bearing on United Nations efforts in dealing with other similar situations.

My delegation attaches great importance to the issue of chemical weapons, transcending this or any other particular situation. In this instance, we are concerned that prolongation of the armed hostilities will increase the opportunity for their use by one party and retaliation by the other. There are now allegations of their use by both sides in the conflict. Any use of such inhumane weapons cannot be justified under international law as it directly contravenes the 1925 Geneva Protocol and should be condemned in the same way that the war itself should be condemned.

My delegation would therefore support any further effort by the Secretary-General to ascertain the facts as well as to ensure strict compliance with the Geneva Protocol in this regard. It is noteworthy that such compliance constitutes one of the eight points proposed by the Secretary-General. We appeal to both sides to co-operate with the Secretary-General on reaching agreement on this as well as on the other points without delay. We must also voice our deep

(Mr. Kasemsri, Thailand)

distress over the recent report of the downing of a civilian aircraft with 46 persons on board, including some Iranian parliamentarians - a matter which should be covered by the second and third of the Secretary-General's eight points.

The immediate concern of the Security Council should be to bring the fratricidal blood-letting to an end in order to pave the way for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement of the dispute. Since the Council is not in a position to impose any arrangement or terms on the parties, it can and must state the general principles, as well as its collective position, and urge practical modalities to achieve the desired outcome. The parties are then expected to resort to appropriate means of pacific settlement in order to arrive at mutually acceptable arrangements. Such means should include the standing offer of good offices and mediation by the Secretary-General, but should not be limited to them. It is to be hoped that, in carrying out its responsibility, the Council's sincere motivation will not be misunderstood and that its sincere desire to see peace restored between the two neighbouring countries will not be frustrated.

With regard to the draft resolution contained in document S/17859, now before the Council, my delegation feels that its general thrust is in conformity with the principles and practice of the Council, even though it does not fully take into account some of the concerns I have heretofore expressed. Accordingly, my delegation will vote in support of it.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): The Council has met to consider a situation which is among the most serious on its agenda. The Council has been and continues to be deeply concerned at this tragic and unnecessary conflict. We have all felt frustrated at our lack of success in ending it. Despite this, we must persist in our efforts while giving full support to the Secretary-General in his. A solution is urgently needed.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

On this occasion, meeting in formal session, we have been honoured by the presence and the statements of a number of Foreign Ministers and Deputy Foreign Ministers of States closely concerned, among them the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq. I regret that we have not had the benefit of hearing the case of the other party in the conflict, whose participation in the work of the Council would considerably improve prospects of a just and honourable negotiated settlement.

During our deliberations all of us have been aware of reports of a further escalation of the fighting and of statements made about its possible development. We fully share the concern expressed by nearby States which have consistently sought to avoid being drawn into the conflict and which, as we have heard here, urge an early peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Previous speakers have urged the Council to take effective action. That, too, is the wish of my delegation, as I am sure it is of all others. Such action must have as its clear objective the agreement of both sides to a series of related steps: first, an immediate cease-fire in order to end the senseless slaughter which has already cost the lives of hundreds of thousands, combatants and non-combatants alike; secondly, withdrawal of all forces to the boundaries recognized before the outbreak of hostilities; and, thirdly, the opening of negotiations, directly or under United Nations auspices - if that is what the parties desire - leading to a permanent end to all hostilities and to a just, honourable and comprehensive settlement of all aspects of the conflict, including as appropriate the question of boundaries.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

The United Nations will need to play a major role in bringing about this programme. The cease-fire and withdrawal will need to be supervised and monitored by United Nations personnel authorized by the Security Council and organized and controlled by the Secretary-General. In addition, the Secretary-General will need to exercise mediatory efforts to resolve all aspects of the conflict leading to a just, honourable and comprehensive settlement. In the background, this Council should stand ready to give support and to exercise good offices as required.

In pursuing those objectives my delegation will be swayed by the facts and needs of the situation, not by pressure from one or another side. The needs I have already described; the facts are widely known. It is now a question of both sides accepting the steps which have been identified. My delegation notes the letter received by the Secretary-General from His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran, and circulated as Security Council document S/17849 on 19 February, in which Iran expresses appreciation of the valuable efforts of the Secretary-General and its belief that the Council should reaffirm his mandate to enable him to pursue what it rightly describes as his constructive efforts. The Iraqi Government takes the same view and has expressed its readiness to co-operate with the Council, a point which we appreciate. Preceding speakers have referred to the trust placed by both parties in the Secretary-General. We believe this element is indeed one of the most important in our common efforts to build an approach between the positions of the two sides and thereby put an end to the fighting.

While the Council's clear programme, as I have stated, should be an early cease-fire followed by withdrawal and negotiations, there are aspects of this bitter conflict which, until it ends, also rightly and gravely concern us. They include the treatment of prisoners of war, a matter on which both sides appear to be in serious breach of their international obligations. There is also the question

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

of the bombardment on various occasions of civilian centres in contravention of international law under the Geneva Conventions of 1949. There continue to be attacks on the shipping of States that are not parties to the hostilities, contrary to international law, and interference with the freedom of navigation. It is important that the resolution of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) of 23 April 1985 concerning the safety of civil aircraft be fully respected. The use of chemical weapons against Iranian troops, confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General's team of experts in April last year - and serious allegations by both sides have now again been made to the Council - is an aspect of this conflict which is of the gravest concern to my delegation, as it is to others. This matter cannot be set aside or treated as a minor concern. Investigation and action should be undertaken in accordance with past practice. However, neither that, nor any of the other issues I have mentioned, should be allowed to cause delay in efforts to end the fighting, which remains our most pressing concern. It should, on the contrary, serve as an added incentive to all parties to seek an immediate solution.

In conclusion, these are circumstances and this is a time for action by the machinery of the United Nations. The circumstances remain very difficult, and the chances of success are, at the best, uncertain. Nevertheless, we must try with all resolution and skill to put a comprehensive end to this conflict. With the co-operation of both sides, it can be done.

Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation listened carefully to the statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz, and his colleagues members of the Committee of Seven of the League of Arab States, on the settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict. Such a high level of representation of participants in the Council's debate on the item on its agenda

(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

obviously attests to their profound concern at the general trend of developments in the region as a whole and at the recent escalation of hostilities on the Iran-Iraq front in particular.

That concern, as we have seen, is - for very understandable reasons - fully shared by the overwhelming majority of the international community. All the statements we have heard in this Chamber have stressed one main idea, namely, that the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq, which has now been waged for more than five years, has caused and is continuing to cause untold misery and suffering for the peoples of both countries, is a factor in the serious destabilization of the situation in that region and constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security.

That is precisely the Soviet Union's approach to this conflict, for it clearly cannot fail to be concerned to eliminate dangerous pockets of tension and conflict in areas that are in the immediate vicinity of its borders. Since the very beginning of that tragic and senseless war, when it was just beginning to gain its destructive momentum, the Soviet Union has clearly and strongly supported its immediate cessation and the channelling of the conflict towards a political settlement. We continue to believe that in resolving differences and disputes among States the use or threat of use of force must be avoided. Such conflict situations must be resolved through peaceful political means alone, on mutually acceptable conditions, bearing in mind the legitimate interests of the States and peoples involved in the conflict. As is well known, that is one of the basic tenets of the United Nations Charter, which obliges all Members of the Organization to resolve their international disputes by peaceful means and thus not threaten international peace and security, and it is fully applicable to the Iran-Iraq conflict.

(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

Today, we once again emphatically repeat: the Soviet Union believes that the disputes between these two countries should be resolved around the negotiating table, not on the battlefield. In the light of that position of principle, and out of a sincere desire to promote efforts to halt the Iran-Iraq conflict, the Soviet Union has supported all earlier decisions of the Security Council on this issue.

(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

The Soviet Union has consistently supported, and continues to support, the mediation mission of the Secretary-General and the other constructive international efforts aimed at resolving this conflict by political means. One only regrets that those efforts have so far not yielded tangible results. In the face of another dangerous escalation of hostilities, we believe it particularly necessary and urgent to step up political efforts to bring about a speedy cessation of the Iran-Iraq war. The only ones who gain from this war are those who seek to weaken Iran and Iraq and to destabilize the general situation in the region. The Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations must make their constructive contribution to attain the goal of a speedy resolution of the conflict.

In conclusion, we wish to recall that the Soviet Union has always strongly opposed, and continues to oppose, any attempts to use the Iran-Iraq conflict as a pretext for any outside interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region. It is the countries and the peoples of the region alone who have the sovereign right to ensure their own security and to manage their own natural resources.

On the basis of what I have set forth, the Soviet Union will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/17859. It also expresses the hope that the parties will respond to the appeal contained in it.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): One of the most bitter and costly wars of this century is now continuing into its sixth year between Iran and Iraq. It has been and remains a desperate tragedy for hundreds of thousands of Iranians and Iraqis. Since its start, the United States has sought the earliest possible end of this conflict with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both sides intact. We continue to do so.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The primary responsibility for the continuation of this senseless struggle lies with Iran, which has rebuffed the many efforts of the international community to bring the war to an end.

The United States is deeply disturbed by the intensification of fighting that began on 9 February. We call on the Iranian Government to put an end to its latest offensive.

We are also troubled by reports that once again chemical weapons have been employed. We have consistently condemned such use in the past, and we do so in this case. At a time when the world community has dedicated itself to negotiating a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, my Government views such use with the deepest concern. The use of chemical weapons is a serious violation of international law. It threatens the efforts of many decades to ban this kind of warfare, and we call for its immediate end.

The United States has long been concerned by the danger that this conflict may expand to the neutral neighbouring States of the Gulf region. We wish once again to make clear that such an enlargement of the war by a belligerent would be a serious and adverse development, one which we would regard as a major threat to United States interests.

The United States has consistently supported the many commendable efforts by international organizations and individual States to facilitate a settlement of this conflict. They have persevered in their attempts to mediate or otherwise facilitate negotiations in order to provide a diplomatic substitute for force. The Secretary-General has repeatedly offered frameworks for negotiation which we believe could be fruitful. My delegation continues to attach importance to the Security Council's offer to explore with each belligerent its position with a view to initiating a process that could lead to the resolution of grievances and an end to the fighting. We will continue to support actively all such balanced efforts that promise to hasten an end to the loss of life.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

We deeply regret that for long years comprehensive negotiations and a mediated end to the struggle have eluded a world community which unanimously desires them. We now urgently hope that international efforts to seek a just and peaceful resolution to the conflict can go forward with the least possible delay.

Mr. LIANG Yufan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): On the situation between Iran and Iraq, an issue now under consideration by the Security Council, the Chinese delegation wishes to state the following:

Firstly, the recent serious escalation in the war between Iran and Iraq has generated a dangerous situation in the Gulf region, and the Chinese Government is deeply concerned and disturbed by this development. The Chinese delegation hopes that the current consideration of the matter by the Council will help alleviate the dangerous situation in the region and contribute positively to an eventual settlement of the dispute between Iran and Iraq that is fair, reasonable and peaceful.

Secondly, the Iran-Iraq war has entered its sixth year. The prolonged war of over five years has inflicted deep wounds on both countries and incurred incalculable losses of life and property of the two peoples, and the peace and stability of the Gulf region has been under a serious threat. We are deeply saddened by all this and worried about the future of the war. As a friend of both Iraq and Iran, China has consistently advocated ever since the outbreak of the war that the war should be ended as early as possible under terms acceptable to both sides and that their differences should be settled through peaceful negotiations. Such an approach is not only in conformity with the fundamental interests of the two peoples, but also conducive to the peace and stability of the Gulf region. It will be welcomed by the people of all countries. Today, in this forum, I wish to reiterate the above position of the Chinese Government and call on the two parties

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

to cease all actions that may lead to the escalation of war, so as to create an atmosphere for a prompt end to the war.

Thirdly, to terminate the fratricidal war between two Muslim countries, Iran and Iraq, the international community has done a great deal of mediation work. The Chinese delegation is of the view that the international community should make even greater efforts in this regard. China supports all proposals that are conducive to the achievement of a fair, reasonable and peaceful settlement of the disputes between Iran and Iraq based on the principles of international law and is ready to make its positive contributions in this respect. We want to point out emphatically that as the main international organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council is in duty-bound to seek a peaceful settlement of the disputes between Iran and Iraq. We fully support the Secretary-General in his continued efforts in using his good offices.

China has consistently opposed the use of chemical, bacteriological and toxic weapons at any place and time. I wish to reiterate here this position of China.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): It is my understanding that members of the Council are ready to proceed to the vote on draft resolution S/17859. If there is no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now call on members wishing to make a statement before before the vote.

Mr. BIERRING (Denmark): My country has a long history of friendly relations with both Iran and Iraq, as well as with other countries in the region. We have therefore viewed the conflict with the deepest concern and with an ardent wish to see it brought to an end as speedily as possible.

I am sure that my colleagues around this table will agree that we have laboured hard to achieve a breakthrough towards a solution. We may have failed in part; nevertheless, in our view, the draft resolution which is before the Council - and which will, we hope, be adopted - reflects a serious and unprecedented effort to reflect as balanced and comprehensive a view as possible of the conflict, of its origin and of its tragic course, as well as of the steps necessary to terminate it.

Whatever the shortcomings of the draft resolution, we thus feel that we should launch an urgent appeal to both parties to co-operate to the full with the Council and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the implementation of the draft resolution to be voted upon, so that this conflict, which was begun without justification, which has continued unnecessarily and which has demanded such a heavy toll in innocent lives, can finally be brought to an end.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): The tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq has been a continuing source of intense international concern for over five years now. That concern, which is fully shared by the Australian Government, extends to the appalling loss of life on both sides, the widespread destruction of property and the incalculable human suffering.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

As we all know, the escalating conflict has resulted in a number of violations of international law. My Government has been particularly concerned at the use of chemical weapons in the conflict. This continuing conflict also has serious implications for regional and international security.

In these circumstances, Australia believes that what is required is an immediate cease-fire, leading to negotiations on a comprehensive settlement. This should include respect for international boundaries and an end to further attacks by either side.

Australia believes that the Security Council has clear obligations in addressing the present situation. Faced with the recent serious escalation in hostilities, the Council could not, in our view, remain silent. For this reason, Australia joined with a number of countries, both non-aligned and aligned - and, indeed, with Iraq and Iran and with you, Mr. President - in a serious search for a basis on which the Council might help to open the way to a settlement.

The draft resolution before the Council is a serious attempt to focus on the relevant issues. It does so in a way which does not, of course, accord fully with the attitudes of either Iran or Iraq. But we believe that it does lay an objective foundation on which to build a settlement. For that reason Australia will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. In doing so, we wish to say that the draft resolution can work only if both parties regard it as an acceptable basis for promoting a settlement. Many hours and a great deal of consultation have gone into ensuring that the draft resolution does provide such a basis to the greatest practical extent.

My delegation appeals to both parties to acknowledge this, and to co-operate with the Security Council and with the Secretary-General. The Australian delegation also trusts that the international community as a whole will now urge

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

the parties to make the most of the new opportunity this draft resolution will provide. It would, after all, be a great shame if this opportunity were to be lost.

Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): At the request of the Committee of Seven of the Council of the League of Arab States, the Security Council has been meeting to consider the situation between Iran and Iraq in the light of the most recent events. Very relevant statements have been made - including that of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. We share the concerns expressed by all, for we are convinced that the consequences of the futile escalation and prolongation of the conflict between the two countries and of the resulting heavy material and human losses cannot but be extremely harmful to regional and international peace and security.

The Council's collective contribution to the debate, which would have been the clearer and the richer for the participation of the other party, has resulted in the draft resolution contained in document S/17859. Intensive consultations and negotiations were held on that draft resolution, which, in our view, takes into account all viewpoints, and especially the philosophy which has emerged in the Council aimed at fostering the mediation efforts of the United Nations. Thus, it is no accident that we find running through the Council's resolutions and statements more or less the same elements, such as references to a cease-fire, to withdrawal, to cessation of hostilities and to other aspects of the conflict.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

In the present circumstances, all that the Council can do is propose steps and solutions advocated by the Charter and international law as well as a framework for negotiations acceptable to both parties. It remains understood that it is the parties that will have to define, with the co-operation and assistance of the Council and the Secretary-General, the contents, scope and purpose of those negotiations, if they wish to do so. That means that, so far as we are concerned, we are not certain that the Council is in a position fully to carry out its responsibilities, or even to give a positive reply to everything that one or the other party might request of it. That situation is the result of two facts: on the one hand, the lack of practical means or machinery to enforce our decisions and to follow up their implementation; and, on the other, our obligation to place the present conflict in a historical perspective and its political context - whether it is a question of its origins, its development or its outcome.

We would have preferred the first three operative paragraphs of the draft resolution to reflect this twofold concern more strictly and also objectively. That would not have basically changed the facts, but it could have established the climate of trust and credibility that is essential if we wish to play a constructive role in the settlement of this very serious and painful problem.

At this stage, my delegation will refrain from making any value judgements. But Madagascar's position on the conflict between Iran and Iraq remains the same. We have excellent relations with the two countries; and as a member, like them, of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, we attach great importance to the concepts of solidarity and unity. We are also convinced that the restoration of normal relations between the two countries and in the region must conform to the following seven principles: the inadmissibility of the occupation and acquisition

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

of territory by force; the obligation to return such territory; non-recourse to aggression in any form whatever; respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States; peaceful settlement of disputes; and peaceful relations among States.

It is those very principles which have since October 1980 inspired the ministerial good-offices and good-will committee of the non-aligned countries and which are at the basis of the joint efforts of the Secretary-General and the Security Council. They are valid everywhere, at all times, in all circumstances; but, unfortunately, simply stating them will not suffice to unfreeze the present situation. However that may be, if all of us respect them and, individually or collectively, do everything in our power to ensure strict compliance with them, we shall be in a better position to affirm that negotiations between the parties are no longer purely hypothetical and we shall be able to envisage conciliation finally leading to the acceptance of the peaceful, just and honourable political solution the quest for which it is our duty to encourage.

On the basis of all those considerations, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution in document S/17859.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): Several days ago the Security Council was requested by the Committee of Seven of the Council of the League of Arab States to convene urgently to consider the latest escalation in the tragic conflict that for more than five years now has ravaged Iran and Iraq and inflicted on two great nations unspeakable suffering and misfortune.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

France is deeply concerned by the continuation of this disastrous conflict and cannot but be alarmed at the launching of new military operations on the territory of a foreign State, operations which are a danger to the security of the region and the territorial integrity of the neighbouring States and, furthermore, entail the risk that the war will spread.

With the greatest insistence, France again calls for the cessation of hostilities, for respect for international law and for the urgent quest for a settlement acceptable to the two parties. To be lasting, such a settlement must be comprehensive, just and honourable. It must be based on respect for the sovereignty of the two States.

Against that background, France considers that it is indispensable that the relevant resolutions of our Council and the rules of international law, particularly on the humanitarian level, should be accepted without any reservations and urgently implemented. That is why France fervently hopes that the good-will efforts that were undertaken will be actively resumed. France hopes, in particular, that the United Nations Secretary-General will be able to give new impetus to the action he has undertaken towards inducing the parties to display moderation and a spirit of co-operation. There can be no doubt, indeed, that such action will make possible the creation of the conditions for a settlement. Hence, we wholeheartedly hope that the appeal for a cessation of hostilities that is to be made by the Security Council will be heeded by the two parties.

It is in that spirit that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution. In this connection, I wish to specify that we give the word "decisions" in the second paragraph of the preamble the meaning of Article 25 of the Charter - that is, as covering the resolutions of the Security Council.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document S/17859.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Australia, Bulgaria, China, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Madagascar, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 582 (1986).

The representative of Iraq wishes to speak, and I now call on him.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq): I shall not detain the Council for long. I have two brief points to convey to the Council on behalf of my delegation.

First, the Government of Iraq will, with the utmost seriousness, consider the resolution that the Council has just adopted unanimously, and I shall not fail to convey to the Council the decision of my Government in that regard in due course.

My second point - and my duty, indeed - is to express on behalf of the delegation of Iraq our sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to the Council collectively and to individual members of the Council, every one of them, for the seriousness and diligence with which the Council has considered the matter, commensurate with the seriousness of the item we have brought before it.

It remains for me to say that in a week of intense deliberations and, as I have said, seriousness, we have received from every member of the Council - and from you, Mr. President, especially - the utmost courtesy, and for that we are grateful indeed.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): There are no further speakers. The Security Council has therefore concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.