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Letter dated 5 April 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United-Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a letter from His Excellency, Dr. Ali-Akbar Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to Your Excellency,

It will be highly appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 63 of the preliminary list, and Of the Security Council,

(Signed) Mahmoud S. MADARSHAHI
Ambassador

* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic
of Iran to the Secretary-General

In reference to the letter of the Foreign Minister of Iraq, dated 4 April 1988, addressed to Your Excellency (S/19730), I would like to bring the following to your attention.

The Islamic Republic **of** Iran **categorically** rejects the **baseless** allegation **advanced** by the Iraqi **régime** in a vain attempt to divert **international** public opinion from Iraqi genocide in the city **of Halabja** and in the Ghars-Dagh region, **where** Iraqi civilians were targets of chemical warfare by the Iraqi **war** criminals. The **Permanent** Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations has informed Your Excellency of the latest Iraqi resorts to chemical warfare against Iraqi civilians in **Ghare-Dagh** region in its letter of 4 April 1988 (A/43/281-5/19733).

It should be noted that the Iraqi **régime** has not requested the Secretary-General to dispatch the United Nations team of specialists to the **affected areas** where the responsibility for chemical attacks could be determined. Rather, **it** has merely asked the team to visit **hospitals** in Baghdad, while it has been authoritatively and independently established that, owing to certain atmospheric conditions, Iraqi soldiers were in previous cases affected by chemical weapons that the Iraqi **régime** itself deployed. Therefore, a simple visit to Iraqi soldiers in Baghdad hospitals will not be able to shed any light on the source of responsibility for this inhuman act.

The Secretary-General has responded **positively** to the untenable Iraqi request within 24 hours, while it took more than two weeks for the Secretary-General to respond to serious and repeated requests by the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding a far more grave situation. Nevertheless, since the Iraqi **régime** has now requested the dispatch of the team, it cannot - as in the previous case - prevent a full and comprehensive examination of the available evidence in Iran and Iraq. While the team which has recently completed its investigation in the Islamic Republic of Iran had ample evidence at its disposal to carry out its task in its own capacity, there remains a large body of evidence in the sites of the chemical attacks to be examined by the specialists who were not included in the team. Therefore, it is imperative to dispatch a chemical weapons specialist as well as a military specialist to the Islamic Republic of Iran to complete the work of the previous team.

Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that the Secretary-General should dispatch a full team, **including** chemical weapons and **military** specialists to the affected areas. In addition to **visiting** the patients, and with a view to investigating the claims of use of chemical weapons by the **parties**, the team should be **authorized** to visit the areas which have **been** subject to chemical attacks. In this connection, visits to Halabja and Ghare-Dagh region

are indispensable. Halabja suffered from an unprecedented resort to chemical warfare by Iraq on 18 March 1988. Furthermore, the Iraqi regime has made a baseless accusation against the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to the same city. Therefore, any investigation without a visit to Halabja will indeed be incomplete.

Moreover, the most recent Iraqi resort to chemical warfare against its own civilians occurred in the Ghare-Dagh region, with a large number of civilian casualties. In addition to conducting on-site investigation of the extent of this latest Iraqi war crime, the team can indeed provide the urgently needed and, till now unavailable, emergency medical assistance to the civilian victims of Iraqi chemical warfare in the Ghare-Dagh region.

In view of the repeated use of chemical weapons in increasingly alarming proportions by Iraq, it is necessary that this investigative endeavour of the Secretary-General lead to a binding and enforceable decision on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. It is imperative that the parties commit themselves to accept and abide by such a binding decision.

Ali-Akbar VELAYATI
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran
