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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION
OF THE MIDDLE EAST

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 13 February 1989 from the Permanent Representative of
Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the communiqué issued by the Council of the League of Arab States at its extraordinary session of 12 January 1989 concerning the findings of the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, held at Paris from 7 to 11 January 1989.

I request you to have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under the items entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" and "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons".

(Signed) Ahmed GHEZAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tunisia to the
United Nations
Chairman of the Arab Group for
the month of February 1989

ANNEX

Communiqué issued by the Council of the League of Arab States at its extraordinary session of 12 January 1989 concerning the findings of the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

The Council of the League of Arab States, meeting in extraordinary session at the Foreign Ministerial level on 12 January 1989, having reviewed the findings of the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the final declaration issued by the Conference, affirms that this declaration contains a set of points for promoting the efforts of the international community to secure general and complete disarmament, particularly with respect to weapons of mass destruction, within the ambit of the United Nations, which is considered to be the framework and the instrument enabling the international community to achieve that end. These efforts have the full support of the Arab States.

The Council affirms also that the safeguarding of international peace and security requires not only the prohibition of the possession and use of chemical weapons but also the prohibition of the possession and use of other weapons of mass destruction throughout the world and in the region of the Middle East in particular.

In the light of the foregoing, the Council of the League of Arab States welcomes the final declaration of the Conference and takes note of paragraph 6, which reads as follows:

"The participating States, recalling the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978, underline the need to pursue with determination their efforts to secure general and complete disarmament under effective international control, so as to ensure the right of all States to peace and security."

The Council sees in this paragraph in particular a reflection of the positions stated by the Arab States in the course of the discussions and deliberations of the Conference regarding the necessity of linking the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of chemical weapons, in accordance with the priorities referred to in paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978, which provides as follows:

"Priorities in disarmament negotiations shall be: nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; conventional weapons, including any which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects; and reduction of armed forces."

These Arab positions stem from the keen desire of the Arab States for the sincere and genuine intensification of international efforts to ensure optimum conditions for securing regional and international peace and security.