



The Statement of the Association of Protecting Victims of Chemical Weapons in the 24th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (2019)

Mr President

Mr Director-General

Excellencies Ladies and gentlemen present in the 24th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention

As a victim of chemical weapons and the Secretary-General of the Association for Protecting Victims of Chemical Weapons, I am honored to be present in the OPCW which has succeeded in eliminating 97 percent of the world's chemical weapons through the support of its 193 Member States and has thus created a safer world in this regard. Furthermore, it is with pleasure that we victims are members of an organization which has implemented the CWC as the most successful nonproliferation treaty ever since its entry into force in 1997 .

The presence of the victims of chemical weapons in this conference and their social activities bear a significant role in raising awareness on the intensity of the victims' traumas and suffering.

We victims of chemical weapons come to this global coalition to witness that what has happened to us and has brought upon us serious hardship in our lives would not happen to anybody else anywhere in the world.

One historical peak in the use of chemical weapons was by Saddam Hussein's regime against Iran and the people of Halabja. This marked another global catastrophe after World War I for over 117,000 persons.

More than 30 years have gone by after that event and we victims continue to expect the international community to consider our traumas and suffering responsibly. Today, the unilateral

sanctions of the US against Iran have disrupted the treatment of the victims of chemical weapons. Preventing the flow of specific drugs and medical equipment for these victims has deprived them from a normal life.

Distinguished audience

Ladies and gentlemen

As members of the international civil society, we speak out loud that the demands of the victims of chemical weapons in any place and regardless of their race and color must be seriously protected by the states who have convened here. Accordingly, establishing a voluntary fund to assist these victims and putting in place a support network for them are necessary but not adequate means. Providing support to victims in the process of being compensated by producers, vendors, and users of chemical weapons is one deed that the international community has failed to fulfill to this day.

The future outlook is, nevertheless, reliant upon the comprehensive and balanced implementation of the CWC by Member States. Expediting the complete elimination of chemical weapons and promoting the universality of the CWC shall contribute to controlling future threats.

Excellencies

Consider us victims as the ambassadors of peace and friendship and defenders of peace and security in a world which desires to be free of chemical weapons. Thank you.

Seyed Kamal Loh-Moossavi

Secretary-General

Association of Protecting Victims of Chemical Weapons