

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SIXTH COMMITTEE
20th meeting
held on
Thursday, 24 October 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TETU (Canada)
(Vice-Chairman)

later: Mr. AFONSO (Mozambique)
(Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 140: EXPLOITATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AS A WEAPON IN TIMES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND THE TAKING OF PRACTICAL MEASURES TO PREVENT SUCH EXPLOITATION (continued)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.6/46/SR.20
30 October 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 140: EXPLOITATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AS A WEAPON IN TIMES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND THE TAKING OF PRACTICAL MEASURES TO PREVENT SUCH EXPLOITATION (continued) (A/46/141, A/46/358-S/22931)

1. Mr. VAN DE VELDE (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, said that they welcomed the decision to place item 140 on the agenda of the Sixth Committee. In considering the use of the environment as a weapon in times of armed conflict one could not ignore the unprecedented environmental damage caused by Iraq in Kuwait. The deliberate torching of the oil fields represented Kuwait's most pressing environmental problem, beside which all else paled into insignificance according to a report to the Secretary-General based on the findings of a United Nations mission. There could be no doubt that the Iraqi activities had been in flagrant contravention of existing international law, which limited the rights of belligerents to cause suffering and injury to people and to wreak destruction on objects. Massive ecological damage resulting from armed conflict could endanger the very basis of life on the planet.

2. What was required to protect the environment in times of armed conflict was effective implementation of existing international obligations under the laws of war as they related to the environment. Rushing to bring in new legislation in reaction to the environmental damage caused in Kuwait and the Gulf might very well be counter-productive in the long term. The discussion of the item should cover all aspects of the multifaceted topic of protection of the environment during times of armed conflict in general that would require a review of existing international humanitarian law, to determine which rules related to the protection of the environment, their scope, and the extent to which they commanded universal adherence. The existing law might need to be strengthened, for some instruments, such as Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, lacked universality.

3. It would also be necessary to examine the relationship between international environmental law and humanitarian law, which seemed to be developing along rather independent lines, even though the development of environmental law had consequences for the interpretation of rules concerning the protection of the civilian population. In that connection, the importance of adherence to the relevant existing legal instruments in the field of humanitarian law and of full implementation of their provisions should be emphasized. Related efforts should also be looked at. The Twelve considered it very important to examine the results of the twenty-sixth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to be held later in 1991 in Budapest.

(Mr. van de Velde, Netherlands)

4. The framework within which the topic was to be considered should be identified as clearly impossible and a realistic approach should be taken. It would be appropriate for the General Assembly to seek the views of Member States on the matter, as several delegations had suggested.

5. Mr. CRAWFORD (Australia) said that Jordan was to be congratulated for bringing before the Sixth Committee the matter of exploitation of the environment as a weapon, which had been highlighted by events in the Gulf, from whose effects scientists had calculated it would take decades to recover. The world had been appalled by the havoc caused by the massive release of oil into the Gulf and the firing of scores of oil wells. Such damage must not be allowed to happen again.

6. The 1977 United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques was relevant to the agenda item, as were the 1949 Geneva Conventions on the laws of armed conflict and the 1977 additional Protocols thereto, to which Australia was a party.

7. What had been done in Kuwait was clearly illegal under the customary rules of warfare and the traditional concepts of proportionality and military necessity. It had been suggested that it was not further laws on the matter that were needed, but rather a more effective implementation of existing rules. His delegation remained open-minded on that point, but believed more work needed to be done to clarify the issues.

8. His delegation welcomed the suggestion by the representative of Jordan that the item's title should be broadened to "Protection of the environment in armed conflict", since it was not just the use of the environment as a weapon of war that was at stake but the whole environmental impact of armed conflict. That issue had already been discussed in various forums, such as the conference held in London in June 1991 on a possible fifth Geneva Convention on the protection of the environment in time of armed conflict. The United Nations Environment Programme had taken an interest in the subject, and Australia had been privileged to attend a meeting of experts on the use of the environment as a tool of conventional warfare hosted by the Government of Canada in July 1991, at which it had been agreed that the application and development of the law of armed conflict must take account of the evolution of environmental concerns generally, although no consensus emerged on how to proceed. In addition, the Sixth Committee should have the benefit of the conclusions of the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. His delegation would support a resolution on the item calling on Member States to make their views known for further consideration at the forty-seventh session.

9. Mr. AL ADWANI (Kuwait) said that the countries of the civilized world had already acceded to a large number of instruments on environmental protection and on disarmament. What was therefore needed was not a new order relating to environmental protection but renewed commitment by the States parties to the

(Mr. Al Adwani, Kuwait)

existing instruments to adhere to their provisions in order to ensure the protection of the environment and enhance their own credibility.

10. His country had welcomed the inclusion of item 142 in the agenda because of its deep interest in the protection of the environment and of natural resources and in the prevention of their exploitation as a weapon of intimidation. It was to be regretted, however, that the explanatory memorandum annexed to the request for the inclusion of the item had failed to note that the environmental damage done to Kuwait and to the region had been the result of a deliberate act planned since the first days of the Iraqi occupation and not a consequence of military operations. As early as 20 August 1990, his country had addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, (S/21572), informing him that the Iraqi invasion forces had mined all vital Kuwaiti installations, including oil installations, in preparation for their destruction at the outset of any operation for the liberation of Kuwait. That, indeed, was what had happened, and the Iraqi forces had pursued a scorched-earth policy, setting fire to more than 700 oil wells and releasing several million barrels of oil into the waters of the Gulf in the most significant incident of marine pollution in history.

11. The inhuman practices in which the Iraqi forces had engaged during their occupation of the country had prompted the dispatch of a high-level United Nations mission to Kuwait directly after its liberation. The report of that mission, circulated in document S/22535, had described the full extent of the air pollution in Kuwait caused by the smoke and toxic gases emitted by the burning oil wells. The crimes against humanity committed by the Iraqi regime had included exploitation of the environment as a weapon with which to perpetuate its occupation of Kuwait and confront the international community's rejection of that occupation. The amount of crude oil released from storage tanks into the Gulf was estimated at some 6 million barrels, and another 4.2 million barrels had been released from three Iraqi oil tankers.

12. Enormous pools of crude oil had been created by oil flowing from wells that had been damaged but not set on fire, and petroleum had been pumped into the trenches along Kuwait's borders with Saudi Arabia to be ignited the moment the operation for the liberation of Kuwait should begin. Those pools of oil and petroleum were continuing to have a devastating impact on livestock and life on land, and land permeated with oil would continue to be a major environmental problem for the country for a long time to come. Kuwait would suffer for an indefinite period of time from an unprecedented environmental catastrophe whose effects on water, air and livestock were apparent but whose unknown future impact on human health was a source of even greater concern.

13. Against that background, given its concern for the protection of the natural environment in general and in its desire that there should be no recurrence of catastrophes brought about by those who had no appreciation of the importance of environmental protection and placed no value on nature and on human life, his delegation was pleased to announce that Kuwait was prepared

(Mr. Al Adwani, Kuwait)

to cooperate with all Governments, agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations with a view to ensuring compliance with such principles and norms as would ensure the suppression and punishment of the environment for military or other hostile purposes, whether in time of war or peace.

14. Mr. YAMADA (Japan) said that even though the Gulf war had been brought to an end through the concerted efforts of the international community, the destruction it had wrought had not ended: there was massive oil pollution of the Gulf and air pollution caused by the burning of oil wells. Recognizing the seriousness of the impact which the release of oil into the Gulf was having on the environment, Japan had been participating in international clean-up efforts by supplying oil booms and sending experts to help with damage control. Since pollution such as that created in the Gulf region could have grave effects on the future of human life everywhere, it was imperative that the international community address the issue of arbitrary environmental devastation in time of armed conflict.

15. In that connection the Sixth Committee might wish to consider, first, what international law was applicable to the protection of the environment in time of armed conflict and, second, what measures could be taken for the effective implementation of the applicable international law so as to prevent any recurrence of problems such as those existing in the Gulf region.

16. Because any large-scale armed conflict threatened the environment, international efforts to prevent such conflicts were of primary importance. When an armed conflict did occur, the issue of environmental protection must be considered in the context of the law regulating such conflicts. His delegation thought it was both significant and timely for the Sixth Committee to take up the item at the current session and to consider it in a practical and non-political manner while bearing in mind that legal rules aimed at protecting the environment had not yet been established under customary international law. Careful consideration should be given to the applicability of existing international law and measures that could be taken to ensure its effective implementation. He trusted that the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent would yield some important suggestions as to the direction that might be taken by the work of the Sixth Committee, which should request the Secretariat to submit to it a report on the findings of the Conference; comments could then be solicited from Member States and international organizations at the next session.

17. Ms. FEARNLEY (New Zealand) said that a corpus of international law on the exploitation of the environment as a weapon in times of armed conflict already existed, in the form of treaties and customary international law, and an examination of that material might indicate that international law was less lacking in that respect than was sometimes thought to be the case. In that context, she noted the two international instruments concluded in the 1970s with the aim of addressing particular aspects of the issue, namely the

(Ms. Fearnley, New Zealand)

Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1976, and the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The 1976 Convention prohibited military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques having widespread, long-lasting or severe effects as a weapon of warfare, while the 1977 additional Protocol dealt with the environment as a victim of warfare. Her country was a Party to both instruments.

18. In addition to the Conventions there was a solid foundation of existing international customary law which had established the principle that the only legitimate military objective that States might pursue in time of war was the weakening of the military forces of their enemies. As a corollary to that principle, damage which was not necessary for the attainment of a definite military objective was prohibited and illegal. It was Iraq's flagrant violation of those principles and of many other rules of international law in the course of its invasion of Kuwait that had drawn renewed attention to the subject of environmental warfare. Iraq stood rightly condemned for its environmental destruction in Kuwait and in the Gulf, and for its many other illegal actions. The international community must ensure that it was able to confront that serious development by ensuring that any country engaging in such illegal actions must be fully called to account and that international law in that regard was duly respected in the first place.

19. One priority for all States must be the effective implementation of the existing law on the protection of the environment in time of armed conflict. A prerequisite for that implementation was the dissemination of appropriate military manuals and instructions to military commanders in the planning and preparation of military activity.

20. The forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent would provide an opportunity for further discussion of the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict. Her delegation would support the proposal to include a request to States to express their views on the issue, taking into account the outcome of the Conference, in any draft resolution that might result from the Sixth Committee's deliberations on the item.

21. Mr. CORELL (Sweden) said that the Iraqi forces, during their illegal occupation of Kuwait, had caused destruction of the environment on an unprecedented scale, thus underlining the need for the United Nations to take measures to prevent such unacceptable forms of warfare in the future. His delegation accordingly welcomed the timely initiative of Jordan submitted in document A/46/141.

22. The acts of destruction perpetrated by the Iraqi occupation forces in respect of oil installations were obviously in violation of basic principles of customary law and the relevant international treaties, and were clearly

(Mr. Corell, Sweden)

without any military justification. However, the existing rules of international law were not without shortcomings in that they did not make specific reference to environmental damage: such insufficiencies in the existing legal regime must be remedied. In particular, Governments should be recommended to consider identifying weapons, hostile devices and ways of using environmentally damaging techniques with a view to strengthening the international law prohibiting their use. The conclusions reached at the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent should be duly taken into account in that connection.

23. In order to strengthen the existing legal rules and to assess the need for establishing new standards, the Secretary-General should be requested to solicit the views of Member States on the rules and principles of international law relating to the protection of the environment in time of armed conflict, and to submit a report on that item to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

24. Mrs. FLORES (Uruguay) recalled that the Heads of State and Government who had participated in the first Latin American summit in July 1991 had accorded priority to norms applicable in armed conflicts and the definition of a legal framework for the protection of the environment. Document A/46/141 revealed the seriousness of the damage inflicted by the Gulf conflict on the people of the region and the environment, the urgent need to prevent the exploitation of the environment as a weapon, the shortcomings of the existing legal framework, and the need to increase cooperation among States and establish appropriate mechanisms to combat the exploitation of the environment in times of armed conflict.

25. It was indisputable that the environment was an indivisible whole and that damage to any part of it had repercussions for the whole. Moreover, the effects of environmental damage were often unpredictable and sometimes irreversible. Prevention was of crucial importance, whether an armed conflict existed or not; agreements must be reached in order to protect shared natural resources. Specific provision must be made for the exchange of information, consultations, and the possible participation of third parties directly affected by environmental damage, as well as the obligation to report any suspected exploitation of the environment as a weapon. Mechanisms could also be established to monitor situations in which it was believed that the environment was to be used as a weapon. At a later stage consideration would have to be given to a jurisdictional system to deal with any disputes which arose.

26. Since existing international law, both customary and conventional, contained norms to protect the environment at times of armed conflict it could be concluded that the problems which arose did not derive from any shortcomings in the law, but from non-fulfilment of the law. At the same time, the possibility of supplementing existing norms should not be excluded. A number of drafts under consideration by the International Law Commission

(Mrs. Flores, Uruguay)

included articles concerned with the environment, such as article 19 on State responsibility or articles 22 and 26 of the Draft Code of Crimes against the Peace and Security of Mankind. It would be worth seeking the views of Governments and relevant international organizations on the possibility of formulating a new convention emphasizing prevention or the adoption of practical measures to prevent the exploitation of the environment as a weapon. The quality of life of the entire planet was at stake.

27. Mr. ADHIKARI (Nepal) said that in recent decades the proliferation of highly toxic materials, climate change, ozone depletion and pollution had become acute problems which crossed national borders. As indicated in document S/22535, irreparable damage had been done by Iraq during its occupation of Kuwait; as a result of its use of the environment as a weapon of mass destruction, the Gulf war had devastated the atmosphere of the whole region.

28. Action that harmed the environment violated not only the customary rules of international law but also conventional law. All Member States must ratify existing treaties on the environment as soon as possible. Basically, what was lacking was not the law but the political will to implement the law; there was a whole body of law embodying general principles on the protection of the environment. Nevertheless it had been demonstrated in the Gulf war that some of the existing rules were inadequate. His delegation agreed, however, that the Committee should wait for the results of the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which would provide an opportunity to examine legal lacunae in the area of environmental protection during times of armed conflict. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992 would also provide a favourable opportunity for such examination. If those Conferences did not formulate specific provisions for an efficient mechanism to combat the exploitation of the environment in times of armed conflict, the problems might have to be considered in greater length at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

29. Mr. IBRAHIM (Yemen) said that his country, like the other States of the region, had been affected by the damage caused by the Gulf war. It had suffered from the smoke from the burning of oil wells and the seepage of large amounts of oil into the sea. In some areas, black rain had fallen, destroying crops and polluting the soil.

30. The damage caused to the environment as a result of the war had emphasized the importance of adherence to the legal norms on the prohibition on causing damage to the environment in times of armed conflict, norms which had been incorporated in a number of international conventions in the field of humanitarian law, in particular, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol I thereto and the 1977 United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, to which Yemen was a party.

(Mr. Ibrahim, Yemen)

31. Those and other instruments required that States parties should adhere to them strictly, respect them in time of war, provide instruction on them in military institutes and colleges and ensure that they were reflected in national military legislation. They also called on other States that had not acceded to them to do so.

32. Existing provisions on the subject suffered from some defects and ambiguities. It was therefore essential to prepare a new instrument to remedy those defects, for example, by providing for investigatory machinery, clarifying certain procedural issues relating to States' fulfilment of their commitments and specifying the authority empowered to evaluate damage done to the environment during a war and responsibility for it.

33. His delegation agreed with previous speakers concerning the great importance of the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The conclusions of that Conference would undoubtedly be a good basis for treatment of the subject by the Sixth Committee at the next session of the General Assembly.

34. At the current stage, it would be appropriate for the Secretary-General to solicit the views and proposals of States and competent intergovernmental organizations on the subject and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

35. His delegation was willing to accept any other proposals from delegations that would lead to an appropriate consensus formula that would provide the maximum protection for the environment in times of armed conflict.

36. Mr. SHESTAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that Iraq's recent aggression against Kuwait had once again demonstrated the need to prevent the exploitation of the environment as a weapon. However, the Jordanian proposal was just one aspect of a broader problem of legal regulation of the methods and means of waging war. It was most important of all to prevent the outbreak of armed conflicts and try to settle problems by peaceful means; if armed conflict did occur the greatest possible protection must be ensured for all victims. Iraq's aggression and its consequences had raised a whole range of questions including possible omissions in international humanitarian law and the content and scope of existing norms. It had been clear on a number of occasions that not all aspects of the problem of the environment were covered in existing international law. For example, the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques did not fully cover all aspects of environmental modification.

37. The Soviet Union attached great importance to efforts by States and international organizations to prevent conflicts before they emerged or at their early stages. It would be worth establishing an effective international mechanism to prevent the possibility of using the environment as a weapon and

(Mr. Shestakov, USSR)

to settle ecological disputes, while in no way underestimating the significance of existing mechanisms. Despite some omissions and shortcomings, the existing norms of international humanitarian law provided a solid basis, but those mechanisms were by no means always used and, if they were used, were not always used effectively. The 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 additional Protocols thereto were not playing the role assigned to them, partly because some militarily powerful States were not yet parties to those Protocols. The Soviet Union, which had ratified the additional Protocols in 1989, considered it important that States should not only ratify the additional Protocols, but also make the declaration provided for in article 90 of Protocol I.

38. His delegation believed that the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent would help find answers to many of the questions raised in the Committee, and would largely determine what action should be taken in the United Nations. Solutions would have to be found to the problem on a multidisciplinary basis, taking into account ecological, military, legal and other aspects. The views of Governments and international organizations should be sought in order to determine the direction of the Committee's future work.

39. Mr. AHMED (Iraq) said that his delegation greatly appreciated the valuable remarks made by the representative of Jordan in introducing the item and shared the concerns expressed on such a vital matter. It would support the introduction of a procedural draft decision on the item that could be adopted by consensus.

40. Since a number of delegations had attempted to distort what had happened and was still happening as a result of the crisis by presenting a politically biased view that expressed narrow and selfish interests and was remote from any objective consideration of the environmental damage suffered by the region, he would like to remind delegations of the true nature of the environmental catastrophe in which the Iraqi people had been involved.

41. His delegation shared the concern of others for environmental protection and took note with interest of the proposals that they had made, including that for supplementing the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols. It realized the importance of accession to and compliance with the relevant international instruments.

42. His delegation would like to call the attention of the Committee to the letter dated 12 August 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/22931). Referring to the letter dated 13 July 1991 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Kuwait addressed to the Secretary-General (S/22787), it had pointed out that, while Iraq affirmed its willingness to do everything to protect the environment and not to exploit it as a weapon in times of armed conflict, the letter in question had disregarded the appalling environmental damage caused

(Mr. Ahmed, Iraq)

by the coalition forces in Kuwait and Iraq. That damage had affected water purification stations and related chemical facilities, drainage and sewage stations and pipelines, oil refineries, electric power stations and distribution networks and had thus caused untreated effluent to pour into the streets of towns and led to heavy contamination of rivers by sewage, the piling up of garbage, environmental damage to fields and orchards and a serious deterioration in public health, as described in the Ahtisaari report of 20 March 1991 (S/22366) and the report of 15 July 1991 prepared by the mission led by Sadruddin Aga Khan (S/22799). Allied aircraft had, moreover, dropped thousands of tons of bombs on towns and rural areas, roads and bridges, cultivated fields and industrial installations, inflicting serious damage on the environment.

43. The maintenance of the embargo imposed on Iraq since August 1990 had, in turn, inflicted more damage on the environment and on all forms of life in Iraq. It was appropriate to recall, in that connection, the statement made by the representative of the United States of America to the Committee to the effect that, under article 147 of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, extensive destruction of property that was not justified by military necessity was treated as a "grave breach" and that persons committing those breaches had personal liability for their actions.

44. The environmental damage caused in the Gulf, as it related to Iraq, had been addressed by the relevant Security Council resolutions. The United States and its allies, however, remained outside the scope of the Security Council resolutions and had not been confronted with their legal and moral responsibility for the deliberate destruction that they had inflicted on the environment, on the people and on all forms of life in Iraq, in violation of the Geneva Conventions, the Charter of the United Nations and the Security Council resolutions themselves.

45. With regard to the pronouncements of the representative of Kuwait, that representative must be aware that the statements of those who sought protection through a war conducted by mercenaries did not deserve to be accorded credibility.

46. Mr. AL-SUWAIDI (United Arab Emirates) said the fact that the item under consideration, which had been included in the agenda at the request of Jordan, had been referred to the Sixth Committee was proof of the importance accorded to it. One example of the damage caused by the exploitation of the environment as a weapon in times of armed conflict was the unprecedented enormities perpetrated by Iraq against Kuwait through the burning of oil wells, which had polluted the air and the sea and poisoned marine life. There was also a great risk of disease from the pollution which had swept over the region as a whole. It would take decades to restore the previous state of the environment there.

(Mr. Al-Suwaidi, United Arab Emirates)

47. There were numerous international instruments that provided for the protection of the environment, such as The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, Additional Protocol I of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and the United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques. There was thus an international prohibition on States interfering with the environment. Non-accession to the relevant instruments did not mean the absence of international responsibility. International law was an indivisible whole, and State responsibility was based on the requirement to respect international instruments, customs and ethical norms.

48. During the 20 years that had elapsed since the Stockholm International Conference on the Human Environment, there had been increasing awareness of the magnitude of environmental problems, and with the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme, environmental concerns had been introduced into the United Nations system as a whole. However, the dangers of damage to the environment made a call for its protection a matter of urgency. What was required was a scientific evaluation with a view to the drafting of an effective strategy to reduce such damage. It was necessary also to strengthen legal formulas on the basis of the historic responsibility of States to preserve nature for present and future generations. His delegation therefore accorded great importance to the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which would deal, in particular, with the question of protection of the environment in times of armed conflict.

49. Mr. Afonso (Mozambique) took the Chair.

50. Mr. HANAFI (Egypt) said that the Gulf war had lent new urgency to the question of environmental damage resulting from armed conflict, and that Iraq's liability for its violations of the rules of international law in that regard had been clearly affirmed in Security Council resolution 687 (1991). There were, however, grounds for the view that the existing rules of customary and treaty law could be strengthened, and a meeting of experts had been held at Ottawa in July 1991 to discuss that issue and to review the relevant instruments on environmental damage resulting from armed conflicts. Opinions at that meeting, however, had diverged on the question whether the best approach in future would be to work towards a convention or declaration of principles or to stress the need for effective implementation of existing rules. The Sixth Committee could make its contribution by recommending the General Assembly to seek the views of Member States on the issue, which would, as earlier speakers had mentioned, also be discussed at the forthcoming International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

51. Mr. AL ADWANI (Kuwait), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Baghdad regime had been wholly incorrect in referring to the coalition of forces opposing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as "mercenaries": as everyone was aware, the coalition was a combined force set up by the international community in pursuance of Security Council resolutions.