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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Note verbale dated 16 January 1995 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Centre for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations Office in Geneva presents its compliments to the Centre for Human Rights and has the honour to enclose herewith a study entitled "The impact of the use of radiological and trichothecene mycotoxins warfare agents against Iraq in 1991 on the people and environment in Iraq".

The Centre for Human Rights in kindly requested to consider this study as a document under agenda item 12 of the fifty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights.

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STUDY ON

"THE IMPACT OF THE USE OF RADIOLOGICAL AND TRICHOTHECENE MYCOTOXINS WARFARE AGENTS AGAINST IRAQ IN 1991 ON THE PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT IN IRAQ"

SUBMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ TO THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

UNDER ITEM 12

THE TRICHOTHECENE MYCOTOXINS WARFARE AGENTS USED AGAINST IRAQ 1991
BAGHDAD - IRAQ

Despite the most up-to-date weapons and military equipment and the sophisticated technology which were assembled by the coalition forces against Iraqi civilians, the United States and its allies have been using lethal chemical (biological in origin) toxin weapons in Iraq. Moreover, we have good physical and biological evidence from the attack area, namely samples of vegetation, water, soil and blood, as well as urine, and interviews with alleged witnesses of chemical warfare. Samples were analysed and found to contain abnormally high levels of potent mycotoxins, called "Trichothecene", poisonous toxins not indigenous to the region and which are highly toxic to man and animals. These toxins are combinations of T-2, HT-2, (DAS) Diacetoxyscripenol, vomitoxin (DON) and Zearalenone, in high concentrations. The toxins do not occur naturally in the substrates described above and they produce symptoms in humans that could not be correlated with those produced by known or traditionally recognized chemical warfare agents or combinations. Trichothecene toxins are among the persistent environmental contaminates. Toxicoses produce a typical set of toxicological responses in attacked humans, including vomiting, tachycardia, diarrhoea, haemorrhaging, oedema and skin irritation and lesions very similar to those induced by radiation and chemicals, dermal necrosis, breathing difficulties, nausea, dizziness, destruction of haematopoietic (blood-forming) tissue, meningeal haemorrhage of the brain, nervous disorders, coma, inhibition of protein synthesis and immune response and death.

The finding of these toxins in the analysed samples and their absence in background samples from areas not exposed to bombings and the description of the interviewer of yellow stinking smoke which appeared after rocket bombardments and the toxicosis described above strongly implicate their use as warfare agents. Moreover, the finding of T-2 and HT-2 toxins in the blood and urine of some victims of these attacks are unequivocal proof of their use as weapons on Iraq, and provide a proof of the use of trichothecenes as non-conventional warfare agents.

All victims of chemical attack develop stomach and chest pains and vomiting; other symptoms included headache, shortness of breath, dizziness, eye irritation, vision disturbances, rash and rush blisters.

Both T-2 and HT-2 toxins were found in blood samples obtained from victims who complained of vomiting, fever, headache, backaches, swollen eyes and chest pain.

T-2 and other toxins may have an etiological role in the "sudden death toxic syndrome" of people exposed to the attack during bombings. Such action would constitute a violation of two international arms control treaties: the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating Poisons or Other Gases and of Bacteriological Missiles of Warfare Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction.

The United States and its allies have ratified the agreement and all the relevant countries including the United States are parties to the Biological Convention.

Hundreds of people are dying every day as a direct result of this continuing violation of humanitarian law and crime against humanity. I urge you to call on the Security Council to immediately revoke the sanctions and to expedite emergency delivery of medicine, food, equipment and parts purchased by Iraq and needed to protect the life and health of its people without delay, for the death of the innocent and environmental pollution is an unforgivable crime.

THE USE OF RADIOLOGICAL WEAPONS IN THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ - 1991

In 1991, the allies launched their attack on Iraq. They claimed that it was a CLEAN WAR and that the weapons they used were only conventional ones. The weapons used by the allies in the war against Iraq were so immense and diversified, some of which were tested on Iraq for the first time as events proved later on.

Immediately after the cease-fire, and in order to assess the full scale of the damage done to civilian infrastructure by the allies' bombing, Iraq launched a study to identify the weapons used and their potential effects on man and the environment.

While this effort was going on, revelations in the western media about the allies use of radiological weapons in the war came to confirm Iraq's concern that such weapons and other equally devastating ones were used by the allies for the first time on a large scale against its troops, armour and civilian facilities.

The areas studied were in the south of Iraq, specifically in Basrah Province where much of the bombing against Iraqi troops and armour took place. Three areas in the Province were chosen:

- North Rumaila;
- Gudairat Al-Audhaimi;
- The Iraqi side of the demilitarized zone extending from Hafr Al Batin on the Iraqi-Saudi border, all the way through to Um-Kasir port on the Arabian Gulf.

The wreckage of destroyed armour and nearby soil were sampled and carefully analysed in accordance with internationally established methods and procedures. The results show clear contamination of the above-mentioned samples with depleted uranium. Furthermore, an unexploded depleted uranium warhead (DU Penetrator) found near Kharanage Pumping Station on the Iraqi-Saudi Oil pipeline confirm this fact.

The soil sample analyses show that vast areas in Basrah Province are contaminated with radioactive material (DU). This will have devastating short- and long-term effects on man and the environment. Due to the natural

actions and phenomena such as wind effect and groundwater movement, the effects of these pollutants will not be limited to the bombarded areas but will spread to far-away places in the southern region of Iraq.

As a result, many health problems were recorded in the bombarded areas. Foremost of these is the alarming rise of leukaemia cases in children and the appearance of some unidentified diseases in adults as well. That is in addition to the many killed or wounded people due to the immediate effects of these weapons, which result in the total destruction of the targeted armour and the spread of the poisonous DU aerosols over large areas.

The massive use of these radiological weapons results in:

- Mass killing of people because of the highly destructive nature of the weapons;

- Polluting areas outside the battlefield with highly toxic radioactive materials. This threatens the life and health of civilians as well as the environmental quality. This is reflected by the health status in Iraq, especially the mysterious diseases which have never been reported before.

All this gives material proof against the allies' claims that "their war was a clean one".

The international community is required to play its active role in condemning this offensive act, which violates humanity and humanitarian and international laws and conventions, and to launch remedial action to restore the environmental quality in the region from the damage caused by the use of these weapons.

Table 1

North Rumaila Area

		Radioactive Exposure (Micro Rontegen/hr)	
No.	Type of chosen sample	Background	Chosen sample
1	Armoured Personnel Carrier (BMB1)	8.1	24.6
2	Armoured Personnel Carrier (MTLB)	8.2	9.7
3	Tank/T-72	8.7	15.1
4	Tank/T-72	7.2	13.2

Table 2

Shamia Airfield/Gudairat Al Audhaimi Area

		Radioactive Exposure (Micro Rontegen/hr)	
No.	Type of chosen sample	Background	Chosen sample
1	Tank/T-72	7.0	60.8
2	Armoured Personnel Carrier (Watercan)	7.2	60.3
3	Far away area from chosen sample (1)/T-72	7.1	7.3
4	Far away area from chosen sample (1)/T-72	7.3	7.2

Table 3

Iraqi side of the demilitarized Zone and areas nearby

		Radioactive Exposure (Micro Rontegen/hr)	
No.	Type of chosen sample	Background	Chosen sample
1	Unexploded DU Warhead (near Kharange Oil Pumping Station on the Iraqi-Saudi border)	7.4	83.0
2	Tank/T-55 (between crossroad Nos. 13 and 14)	7.6	21.0
3	Tank/T-72 (No. 16107)	7.2	23.0
4	Tank/T-55 (left of crossroad No. 9)	7.4	67.0
5	Tank/T-72 (near international observation post between crossroads 12 and 13)	7.6	69.0
6	Tank/T-72 (South West of Mount Sanam)	7.0	65.0

Table 4

Ratio of radioactivity concentration of Uranium-235 to Thorium-234 in each chosen sample compared to a reference sample

		Ratio of activity	
No.	Area of study	Chosen sample	U-235 to Th-234
1	North Rumaila	BMB1 MTLB T-72 Tank/Rescue	0.016 - 0.022 0.020
2	Shamia Airfield Gudairat Al-Audhaimi	T-72 Watercan	0.017 0.023
3	Iraqi side of DMZ	Unexploded DU Warhead T-55 T-72 T-55 T-72 T-72	0.014 0.012 0.010 0.020 0.024 0.020
4	Reference sample		0.518

Table 5

Radioactivity concentration in samples taken from North Rumaila

		Radioactivity concentration	
No.	Type of chosen sample	Thorium-234	Radium-226
1	Armoured Personnel carrier BMB1 inside-front inside-back soil sample far away from target	 25450 ∓ 150 6706 ∓ 68 Nil	 1286 ∓ 70 1780 ∓ 26 43 ∓ 19
2	Armoured Personnel carrier MTLB	105 ∓ 8	76 ∓ 15
3	Tank/T-72 front-outside front-inside soil - front outside	 2837 ∓ 116 6031 ∓ 195 3011 ∓ 25	 136 ∓ 9 604 ∓ 32 542 ∓ 39
4	Tank/Rescue outside inside	 173 ∓ 11 657 ∓ 30	 104 ∓ 17 205 ∓ 14
5	Background	178 ∓ 9	148 ∓ 12

Table 6

Radioactivity concentration in samples taken from Shamia Airfield

		Radioactivity concentration Bq/kg		
No.	Type of chosen sample	Thorium-234	Radium-226	Uranium-235
1	Tank/T-72 Background	538610 ∓ 21940 <60	17349 ∓ 817 67 ∓ 10	9231 ∓ 156 Nil
2	Armoured Personnel Carrier (Watercan) Background	1970 ∓ 42 60 ∓ 14	282 ∓ 25 58 ∓ 14	44 ∓ 10 Nil

Table 7

Radioactivity concentration in samples taken from the Iraqi side of demilitarized zone and areas nearby

		Radioactivity concentration Bq/kg		
No.	Type of chosen sample	Thorium-234	Radium-226	Uranium-235
1	Unexploded DU warhead (Kharanage pumping stations)	338011 ∓ 1700	72863 ∓ 890	4807 ∓ 207
2	Tank/T-55 between crossroads 13 and 14	6316 ∓ 238	2784 ∓ 158	77
3	Tank/T-72 No. 16107	9264	3432 ∓ 175	99 ∓ 30
4	Tank/T-55 left of crossroad 9	82514 ∓ 866	10811 ∓ 311	1556 ∓ 118
5	Tank/T-72 between crossroads 12 and 13	97883 ∓ 938	8540 ∓ 277	2393
6	Tank/T-72 near Sanam Mount	70042 ∓ 793	7018 ∓ 251	1343 ∓ 109

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