

Iran: victims of chemical weapons attacks

The Iran-Iraq War (also known as the longest conventional war of the 20th century), began in Sep 1980 when Iraq invaded Iran.

During the conflict, Iraq began to employ mustard gas and Nerve agents (tabun , Sarin and Soman) delivered by bombs dropped from airplanes, artillery and other means; it was the first large scale use of chemical weapons since World War I and a grave violation of international law including the 1925 Geneva protocol.

Chemical weapons employed by Saddam Hussein killed and injured tens of thousands of Iranians, and even Iraqis. Iraq also targeted Iranian civilians with chemical weapons. Many thousands were killed in attacks on populations in villages and towns, as well as front-line hospitals. Many still suffer from the severe effects.

According to Iraqi documents, assistance in developing chemical weapons was obtained from firms in many countries, including the United States, West Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France and China.*

About 1,000,000 Iranian soldiers and civilian were exposed to chemical weapons (CW) agents and at least 100,000 were hospitalized because of severe injuries;. The majority of those who survived developed long term health effects including blood, lung and skin complications.

Currently over 65,000 of survivors suffer from exposure-related illnesses and seek medical treatment regularly, while m any are still hospitalized with severe chronic conditions.

Despite the removal of Saddam and his regime, there is deep resentment and anger in Iran that the world did nothing to punish the Western companies that not only helped Iraq develop its chemical weapons arsenal in the first place, but also supported the use of chemical weapons throughout the war.

Even during the trial of Saddam, the court turned the blind eye to the war crimes that he committed against Iranians.