

**Statement by H. E. Dr. M. Javad Zarif  
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
before the Security Council  
on United Nation Peacekeeping  
New York, 12 June 2003**

Mr. President;

Allow me to extend to you my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. I should also commend Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan for his distinguished efforts and excellent manner in which he conducted the work of the Council in the month of May. I wish to thank you as well, Mr. President, for holding this open debate on an important issue on the agenda of the Security Council, which is of great importance to the general membership of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The adoption and enactment of the Statute of the International Criminal Court was a major leap forward in the progressive development of international law. The court is not only a judicial institution designed to investigate and prosecute acts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Its establishment is also a strong political statement in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the entire international community. It is an essential contribution to the preservation of peace and the strengthening of international security and, as such, the international community should not allow it to be undermined.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has signed the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which is now under consideration by the relevant Iranian authorities with a view to being presented to the Parliament for ratification. We believe that the principles and values laid down in the Statute will enable the Court to become an effective organ for the international community to combat the most serious crimes and render justice to their victims.

Mr. President,

This meeting gives us another opportunity to register our concern over a dangerous tendency to undermine international law and erode Security Council's credibility. What the Council is asked to do needs to be approached with extreme care and scrutiny especially in the wake of the unlawful military operations in Iraq, which followed the circumvention of the Security Council.

My delegation is concerned because resolution 1422, whose renewal is sought now, is legally disputed and considered to be questioning the authority of a treaty-based international body, the International Criminal Court. The resolution unduly interfered with the Statute of the ICC, which is concluded among States in accordance with the Law of Treaties—a Law that recognizes only parties to a treaty competent to interpret or amend it.

Moreover, the international community is cognizant of the fact that resolution 1422 could only be adopted after the threat of vetoing the extension of the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and

also the threat to do the same with regard to other peacekeeping mandates that were to come up for renewal, thus jeopardizing the whole UN peacekeeping system. We understand that the members of the Council should act responsibly and in a way not to place in jeopardy the peace-keeping missions that were and continue to be indispensable for maintaining peace and security in the areas of their operations. However, given the safeguards existing in the ICC Statute and the very responsible statements of the officers of the Court, the insistence on the indefinite extension of the provisions of the resolution would amount to seeking impunity for most serious crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We agree with the Secretary-General that such indefinite extension not only undermines the ICC, but in fact undermines the credibility of this Council and peace-keeping operations.

My delegation regrets that a unilateral approach, which is founded on a misplaced notion of placing one country above the law, has created an untenable and unsound situation in the Security Council and in international relations in general. Undoubtedly, such an approach runs counter to the spirit and letter of the UN Charter, especially Article 24, which maintains that the Council acts on behalf of the general membership.

Thank you Mr. President.