

PART 2

HISTORY OF UN WEAPONS INSPECTIONS

- 1 During the 1990s, beginning in April 1991 immediately after the end of the Gulf War, the UN Security Council passed a series of resolutions [see box] establishing the authority of UNSCOM and the IAEA to carry out the work of dismantling Iraq's arsenal of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programmes and long-range ballistic missiles.

UN Security Council Resolutions relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction

UNSCR 687, April 1991 created the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) and required Iraq to accept, unconditionally, "the destruction, removal or rendering harmless, under international supervision" of its chemical and biological weapons, ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150km, and their associated programmes, stocks, components, research and facilities. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was charged with abolition of Iraq's nuclear weapons programme. UNSCOM and the IAEA must report that their mission has been achieved before the Security Council can end sanctions. They have not yet done so.

UNSCR 707, August 1991, stated that Iraq must provide full, final and complete disclosure of all its programmes for weapons of mass destruction and provide unconditional and unrestricted access to UN inspectors. For over a decade Iraq has been in breach of this resolution. Iraq must also cease all nuclear activities of any kind other than civil use of isotopes.

UNSCR 715, October 1991 approved plans prepared by UNSCOM and IAEA for the ongoing monitoring and verification (OMV) arrangements to implement UNSCR 687. Iraq did not accede to this until November 1993. OMV was conducted from April 1995 to 15 December 1998, when the UN left Iraq.

UNSCR 1051, March 1996 stated that Iraq must declare the shipment of dual-use goods which could be used for mass destruction weaponry programmes.

These resolutions were passed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter which is the instrument that allows the UN Security Council to authorise the use of military force to enforce its resolutions.

2. As outlined in UNSCR 687, Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programmes were also a breach of Iraq's commitments under
 - The 1925 Geneva Protocol which bans the use of chemical and biological weapons;