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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
AT ITS TENTH SESSION**

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. Let me welcome you all warmly to the Tenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.
2. I am delighted to see an experienced and distinguished colleague, Ambassador José Antonio Arróspide of Peru, as our newly elected Chairman. Ambassador Arróspide follows in the footsteps of other distinguished permanent representatives to the OPCW who, after serving our policy-making organs in one or another capacity, come to the pinnacle by assuming the duties of this important Chairmanship. Ambassador Arróspide was Chairman of the Executive Council in 2004 and 2005, and in that role he demonstrated true leadership and an ability to foster trust and build consensus—qualities that have come to distinguish our work here at the OPCW.
3. The outgoing Chairman, Mr Paturej of Poland, has certainly lived up to the expectations we all had of his Chairmanship. It is my hope that we will continue to be able to count on his sound advice and his steadfast cooperation, which we have all come to value so much.
4. I would also like to congratulate and welcome all the other members of the General Committee.
5. This year, as in previous years, it is also a privilege and a pleasure for me to extend the warmest of welcomes to delegations coming from their nations' capitals, and to the special representatives that have been able to join us for this important week.
6. During this past year, the OPCW can claim to have consolidated the gains it had made in disarmament, non-proliferation, and international cooperation—and it has also made considerable further progress on each of these fronts. At the same time, several areas still require our constant attention, and much remains to be done. As is customary, I would like to review with you the highlights of a year of work in the areas relevant to the Convention.



Universality

7. Since the Ninth Session of the Conference, considerable progress and momentum continue to be generated in the implementation of the action plan for the universality of the Convention. We can begin by noting that more than half of the States that had not yet joined the Convention when this action plan was adopted barely two years ago, have since done so.
8. In 2005, seven States have ratified or acceded to the Convention: Antigua and Barbuda, Bhutan, Cambodia, Grenada, Honduras, Niue, and Vanuatu. Moreover, during this very Session of the Conference, the Convention will enter into force for the Democratic Republic of Congo, bringing the total number of States Parties to 175. We all can take legitimate satisfaction at this pace of accessions and ratifications.
9. The Technical Secretariat has, of course, done its part—but I think it is only fair to recognise, and to express our gratitude to, the efforts of the States Parties that have joined us enthusiastically in that effort, in some cases taking the initiative by coming forward and assisting those States that have needed some help or guidance before being able to come on board.
10. There remain just 19 States not Party worldwide—11 signatory and 8 non-signatory States.
11. We will continue our determined efforts to work with those States that, for a variety of reasons, have chosen to remain outside the boundaries of the global ban on chemical weapons. I am cautiously optimistic that in the next few months we will see more States joining the overwhelming majority of the international community by ratifying or acceding to the Convention. In the course of our consultations, we have been able to confirm that in most cases no insurmountable obstacles remain to be overcome.
12. We recognise, however, the difficult situations that continue to prevail in those States not Party in the Middle East and on the Korean Peninsula—areas beset with significant and complex difficulties. However, we do not and cannot accept the logic that postpones joining a universal and non-discriminatory disarmament treaty such as the Convention until some distant or indefinite point in the future. I sincerely believe that the entire international community deserves better than that when it comes to weapons that have, after all, been universally condemned, and banned. I also urge all members of the international community to impress on these States not Party the importance they attach to the Convention, which eliminates this horrendous means of destruction, and indeed to the moral obligation of these States not Party to join it.
13. In this spirit, allow me to take this opportunity to welcome the observer delegations of Israel, Lebanon, and the Syrian Arab Republic, and to express my sincere hope that they will continue to engage with us in consultations that will allow them to move closer to joining the Convention in the not-too-distant future.
14. We shall continue to work with these States not Party and with other interested parties to bring them into the ranks of the OPCW.

15. Contrary to what many believed possible when the Convention entered into force, some real progress has been made in the Middle East. The recent accession of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and the significant preparatory work we are carrying out with Iraq, are indications of this continuing progress. In the latter case, we have started providing technical assistance and training, and we look forward to the day when Iraq, once the political institutions envisaged in the recently approved Constitution are in place, joins the Convention and takes its place alongside the other members of the OPCW family.
16. Rapid progress has been seen in Asia and the Pacific Islands, with the result that all Members of the Pacific Islands Forum are now States Parties. Indeed, with the exception of Myanmar and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the entire Asia-Pacific region has now joined the Convention.
17. Representatives of Myanmar have been participating in a number of OPCW activities in the past few months, and we hope that these fruitful and promising exchanges will produce the expected results sooner rather than later.
18. At the same time, we remain open to working towards the accession of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and we have indicated this on a number of occasions to its representatives. Unfortunately, I must say we have received no response to our overtures.
19. The OPCW's commitment remains as strong as ever in Africa, where steady progress has been made with the help of the African Union and the invaluable guidance and support of the African Group of States Parties here in The Hague. Recent regional activities focussing on universality in Africa, and on the implementation of the Convention by African National Authorities, were held last month at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as well as in Abuja, Nigeria. I commend these two nations for their support for, and partnership with, the OPCW in promoting its presence in Africa.
20. Almost all States not Party in Africa have already attended one or more of these events, and several have also received intensive training for their National Authorities, through the courses offered in Paris in June and October of this year, as well as through the workshops held in Lisbon in May, with the generous support of France and Portugal, respectively.
21. In Latin America and the Caribbean, significant impetus towards universality continues to be generated through our own efforts and those of the Organization of American States. The Convention has now entered into force for every continental State in the Americas, and the few remaining States not Party in the Caribbean will hopefully join us in the course of the coming year.
22. Nevertheless, I believe it is important to stress to these States not Party that, much as we understand the difficulties and competing priorities that may explain their failure thus far to join the Convention, they should also bear in mind that, by continuing to stand on the margins of the international community, they are objectively undermining the efforts of 175 States Parties in an area of crucial importance to world peace and security.

23. In our external-outreach efforts we have worked over the last year to strengthen our ties with the United Nations and with regional organisations that have an interest in cooperating with us. We believe in the value of synergy, whereby international organisations form an interlocking institutional web in their efforts to promote and preserve peace and security. Our work with the UN, the AU, the OAS, and the European Union offers tangible proof of this approach, and makes clear our determination to maximise the reach of the OPCW in accordance with its agreed mandate.
24. While I am on the subject of the EU, allow me, one year after the approval of the first EU Joint Action in support of the OPCW, to express our gratitude to our EU Member States for that tangible expression of support, which has enabled the OPCW to increase the level of its activities and extend its reach. In so doing, I would also like to express my hope that in a few days' time the EU will approve a second Joint Action. A year ago, I said that the approval of the first Joint Action was "a landmark decision...opening the way to solid and ongoing cooperation between the EU and the OPCW". I am pleased to report that this has now become a reality.
25. May I, through the British Presidency of the EU, reiterate my gratitude to the Council of the EU and to the representatives of the EU Commission who have worked so hard this past year on the implementation of the various projects supported by the Joint Action, and on the approval of a new Joint Action.

National implementation

26. Important progress has been made this past year in the implementation of the action plan regarding the implementation of Article VII obligations. Delegations will hopefully have before them this week a draft decision on the way forward on this crucial aspect of our work, and it will be up to you, as policy makers for the OPCW, to provide your guidance. What is important, in my view, is that the momentum that has been created not be lost. Collective action by Member States and the Secretariat must continue. It is my hope that the decision will reflect, in a balanced way, indispensable compliance with the Convention, and the need to provide assistance and support to countries that need it.
27. To be sure, much more remains to be done, and this will require that the Secretariat, working hand in hand both with States Parties that have offered assistance and with those that have requested it, step up the effort to see to it that those States Parties that have yet to do so fulfil their Article VII obligations. In short, we will implement your policies faithfully and in full.
28. While recognising the many areas where work still needs to be completed, I must also put on record our satisfaction at the progress made by many Member States that, as against where they stood just two years ago, now have something concrete to show for their efforts, in terms of draft legislation that is in some cases at a highly advanced stage. Work on draft legislation has in many cases involved a sustained and sometimes intense interaction with the Secretariat that is allowing more and more States Parties to fulfil the terms of the plan of action and meet their Article VII obligations. Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to those States

Parties that have offered bilateral support to States Parties that need assistance in meeting these obligations.

Verification

29. Since the Ninth Session of the Conference, State Parties that have declared possession of chemical weapons have made significant efforts to meet their obligations regarding the destruction of their declared stockpiles. As at 1 November 2005, 5 of these 6 States Parties had destroyed approximately 12,235 metric tonnes of chemical-warfare agent under the OPCW verification regime. That figure represents almost 17% of the total stockpiles declared.
30. We all know that the destruction of chemical weapons is an extraordinary undertaking involving considerable operational and technical complexities—to say nothing of the financial resources required. Nevertheless, it is reassuring to see the efforts that these States Parties continue to make to maintain the momentum of destruction. In any case, it is clear that such efforts will need to be intensified in the coming months and years to meet the deadlines set out in the Convention.
31. In the United States of America, two new large-scale chemical weapons destruction facilities, at Pine Bluff and Newport, as well as other non-continuously operated facilities, have started operations. The total amount of chemical-warfare agent destroyed by this State Party has risen so far to approximately 34% of its declared stockpiles. I was happy to confirm, during my recent visit to Washington, D.C., the ongoing commitment of the United States of America to meeting its destruction obligations—a commitment that it has continued to back up with the required financial resources.
32. The Russian Federation has adjusted its programme for the destruction of its chemical weapons, as both it and I have reported to the Council.
33. As a result, the new CWDF in Kambarka is about to begin destruction operations in just a few weeks, and we have high hopes that construction of a second CWDF, located at Maradykovsky, will be completed during the first half of the coming year.
34. Given the size of the Russian stockpile, which is the largest in the world, it is clear that its new destruction programme will have to be implemented in full, and that no further delays can occur if the Russian Federation is to comply with the extended intermediate deadlines agreed to by the Conference. It is fair to say, in terms of the destruction of chemical weapons in the Russian Federation, that we simply cannot afford to let any more time slip by without taking the decisive and resolute action required.
35. I know that the political determination to do so is there, on the part of the Russian government and of the international community, which is bound to support it strongly in order to ensure that it can meet its destruction obligations. That support is coming in particular from the countries that are taking an active part in the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. At this juncture it is of paramount importance that donor States remain fully engaged with the Russian Federation in this process, providing the technical and financial support required to

ensure the continued viability of its destruction programme. For its part, the Russian Federation can help the process along by delivering on all fronts, thus showing the international community its continued determination to abide by the Convention.

36. India, the only State Party that has met the 45% deadline, is about to begin operations at its second CWDF. I commend the Indian government for its exemplary level of compliance and its unwavering determination to bring to fruition its courageous decision to destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles.
37. Good progress has also been made by another State Party, which has destroyed approximately 65% of its stockpile. I think that this State Party can take legitimate pride in this achievement.
38. Meanwhile, new CWDFs are expected to begin operations next year in Albania and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We are working closely with both of these States Parties, and we are encouraged to see that destruction activities that are about to begin will allow them to eliminate their stockpiles by the deadlines set out in the Convention. We of course stand ready to support the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya further in its efforts to meet its destruction obligations.
39. Our verification activities and the operating procedures on which they are based are regularly being assessed and revised in a constant effort to see to it that the Secretariat provides the expected degree of excellence in the most cost-effective way. This approach underpins the efforts to increase our efficiency through what we have called the optimisation of verification—which in simple terms means that we always strive to carry out our verification activities fully, in strict compliance with the terms of the Convention, and in a non-discriminatory manner, but that we also do all this with the minimum level of resources.
40. We have succeeded in doing this through selective and agreed reductions in the number of inspectors on a team whenever this has been possible, and also through the on-call inspector scheme, which has been a great success. All this has allowed us to increase the level of inspections with essentially the same group of regular inspectors and a core group of at most 15 inspectors working under a special-services agreement.
41. I am also particularly satisfied at the seamless transition our inspectorate has achieved between the group of inspectors who are leaving us as a consequence of the OPCW policy on tenure, and the new inspectors we are currently training to gradually become the new generation of inspectors.
42. I must commend all those who have helped in the establishment and implementation of our in-house inspector-training programmes, which are a source of great pride to us, as well as the Member States that have generously contributed to the formation and the honing of individual and team skills. I have in mind our host country, the Netherlands, but also the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Italy. Our sincere gratitude goes to them.
43. Industry verification, although still a relatively minor component of our verification activities compared to demilitarisation inspections, is nonetheless a key factor in

preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons. It will come as no surprise to you to hear that our efforts in this area must increase significantly.

44. We must recognise that we live in a world where access by non-State actors to chemical weapons is a real threat and a more urgent challenge to all of us than the one posed by declared chemical weapons stockpiles, which have been secured and are being destroyed, as we speak, under the scrutiny of OPCW inspectors.
45. I encourage Member States to continue to look into ways and means to make our industry-verification regime more effective and meaningful through a larger number of inspections and also by refining the algorithm for the selection of other chemical production facilities, or OCPFs. The Secretariat continues to actively support the industry cluster in its efforts to achieve this goal. In parallel, and without changing the current selection methodology, the Verification Division is currently adjusting and refining the internal process of selecting sites.

International cooperation and assistance

46. This important core objective of the OPCW has posted a number of remarkable achievements this past year. I would like to start by mentioning the second OPCW exercise on the delivery of assistance (Joint Assistance 2005), which was planned and coordinated jointly by the OPCW, Ukraine, and the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre, or EADRCC, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. It was conducted at the Yavoriv training area near Lviv, Ukraine, from 9 to 13 October 2005.
47. The exercise involved teams from 17 OPCW Member States, including the host nation, Ukraine, and was attended by observers from another 29 OPCW Member States. In addition, a substantial team of experts from the OPCW, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and the EADRCC participated in both operational and support activities. In total almost 1,000 personnel were assembled to test and define international-cooperation procedures to deliver emergency assistance, following a simulated terrorist attack involving chemical-warfare agents.
48. I would like to express my thanks to all the Member States who participated in the exercise; and to Ukraine, in particular, as the host country, with whom we worked closely and effectively, as well as to the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Switzerland for the training that they provided to our investigation-and-assistance team before the exercise. Last but not least, you will allow me to express my gratitude to the Secretariat's own team, which performed so well under the able and dedicated stewardship of the Deputy Director-General.
49. The aim of the exercise for the OPCW was to test our skills and capacities in the investigation of alleged use of chemical-warfare agents, as well as the coordination and delivery of assistance in the case of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons.
50. Joint Assistance 2005 opened a new chapter of cooperation and partnership among national and international agencies that have a responsibility to respond to the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. The exercise demonstrated that, when States and

organisations pool their experience and resources, they are better prepared to face and defeat the emerging threat of chemical terrorism.

51. A key purpose of exercises of this kind is to reveal the capacities of participants, but also to highlight areas where there is still room for improvement. We are now preparing a final evaluation report. Once it is complete, we will prepare a plan, with a timetable, to follow through on the lessons learnt. We will then report formally to Member States on the exercise and the evaluation, which in many ways is the most important part, as well as on the way ahead in 2006.
52. During the last year a number of projects focussing on capacity-building have been completed, notably in the Middle East and Central Asia, while others in the Middle East, Asia (including Indonesia and Malaysia), and Latin America have started this year.
53. The increasing demands from Member States for technical assistance to develop their individual and sometimes regional capacities against chemical weapons are clear indicators of the renewed sense of priority that they are giving to Article X. The Secretariat is dedicated to meeting all these requests within the limits imposed by the level of financial and human resources available to it.
54. We are, of course, indebted to the Member States that have come forward with contributions. These have proven indispensable in allowing us to give positive responses to the demands of Member States. However, this matter clearly requires serious consideration by the policy-making organs, given that, far from reversing, this trend is accelerating steadily.
55. In the area of international cooperation, Member States will recall that the Associate Programme was introduced on a pilot basis in 2000. Since then, the Programme has come a long way. Six editions of it have been successfully implemented. The outstanding quality of the Programme has been possible only with the support of Member States and the chemical industries of our industrialised States Parties. Again we are victims of our own success, as more and more technical experts from developing nations aspire to participate in the Programme. I would urge those States Parties that are in a position to do so, to continue to support this important Programme.
56. Another tangible example of international cooperation in action is the analytical-skills development course that was introduced last year and had its second edition in 2005, thus consolidating its place as a fixture on the OPCW roster. The course was conducted in the Netherlands with the help of a voluntary contribution from the EU, for which we are grateful.
57. Two new projects were introduced this year with funding assistance from the EU, as I mentioned earlier: a project to provide support in the form of equipment to National Authorities, and a laboratory-assistance project. For the first time in its history, the Secretariat was able to donate computers and accessories to National Authorities—50 in all. Under the second project, 8 publicly funded laboratories will soon be receiving analytical equipment.

58. Another new initiative was launched this year with the introduction of a course on the enhancement of laboratory skills in analysing chemicals related to the Convention. The course was organised in collaboration with the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Convention, or VERIFIN. This was a high-level course that focussed on advanced practical analytical techniques related directly to the Convention. We are grateful to VERIFIN for its efforts, and we hope to do be able to offer more of these courses in the future.

Administrative and human-resources matters

59. The Conference has before it at this Session the 2006 Draft Programme and Budget, which the Council, after extensive consultations that started in June of this year, has recommended for its approval. I wish to commend Member States for their hard work and for the extraordinary spirit of compromise, which have allowed us, for the first time in many years, to begin a Session of the Conference with a fully endorsed document.
60. The Draft Budget allocates resources at a level commensurate with our programme requirements—but even as it does this it reduces overall expenditure for 2006 to below the level agreed by Member States for 2005. The Draft Budget calls, in nominal terms, for zero growth and for reductions in assessed annual contributions by Member States of just under 1.3% from the levels for 2005.
61. One thing, though, is critically important for all of this to be feasible. Among the many ways in which Member States can demonstrate their political commitment to the Convention, making timely payments is key. Paying the assessed contributions in full and on time and, in the case of States Parties that have declared possession of chemical weapons, promptly settling their Article IV and V bills, are crucial to the Secretariat's ability to promptly and efficiently deliver the services Member States expect of it.
62. Despite the fiscal discipline illustrated by the parameters I mentioned a moment ago, the 2006 Draft Budget provides funding for a number of significant programme priorities that are aligned with demands emerging from the agreed core objectives of the OPCW. First, it provides for an expected 12% increase in missions to verify the destruction of chemical weapons. In this regard, we are matching the efforts of the States Parties concerned, to increase the pace of their destruction campaigns.
63. As a further priority, the 2006 Draft Budget provides for an increase in Article VI inspections from 162 in 2005 to 180 in 2006.
64. As I mentioned a few moments ago, international-cooperation and assistance programmes also continue to be a priority for the OPCW. A number of new staffing positions have been included in the 2006 Draft Budget to better support these programmes and to facilitate effective delivery.
65. I am also grateful for the Council's endorsement of our request for a number of new positions in the Secretariat's Human Resources Branch. The addition of these posts will provide some much needed relief in an area where the workload has increased

significantly in the past two years as a consequence of the implementation of the OPCW policy on tenure.

66. I have also submitted a report to the Conference, as required, on the status of the Working Capital Fund. Although we have been able to avoid drawing from the Fund this year, I should point out that, as at the end of October, the OPCW had received only two-thirds of its annual contributions for 2005. These amounts were all due last January, and delays of this kind complicate our ability to plan and deliver the programme approved by Member States.
67. Once again I urge Member States to comply with their financial obligations to the OPCW in a timely manner so that the Secretariat can deliver the approved programme in full.
68. I would now like to say a few words about human resources. As part of our concerted efforts to strengthen the management of our staff in a new environment marked by the introduction of the OPCW policy on tenure and by results-based budgeting, the Secretariat is improving the Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS).
69. A new administrative directive is being developed, and training in the new PMAS started in October 2005 in preparation for the launch of the new system at the beginning of next year.
70. In the same vein, a human-resources-planning system will also be developed to better address the need for personnel and knowledge management. The planning system will be introduced gradually in the course of 2006.
71. Before concluding my remarks on human-resources matters, allow me to say a few words about the OPCW policy on tenure. Since the Ninth Session of the Conference, the International Labour Organisation Administrative Tribunal has reviewed, through a number of cases before it, the implementation of the OPCW policy on tenure and confirmed the appropriateness and legality of the approach we have taken.
72. The year 2006 will be the third full year in which the tenure policy will be implemented. I intend to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the way in which this process has been implemented, and to submit this, along with our initial conclusions, for the consideration of Member States.

Second Review Conference

73. During the Forty-Second Session of the Council I recalled that, in accordance with paragraph 22 of Article VII of the Convention, the OPCW is required to convene, no later than April 2008, the Second Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, or Second Review Conference.
74. Based on our experience with the First Review Conference, I stressed that it would be advisable to start with preparatory work for the Second in the latter part of 2006, and suggested that, to that end, the Conference at this very Session might address this

matter with a view to tasking the Council to again establish an open-ended working group to prepare, with the assistance of the Secretariat, the necessary background documentation, and to make the relevant recommendations on the substantive and organisational aspects of the Second Review Conference. I hope we can count on your guidance on this important matter.

International Day of Remembrance and Commemoration

75. Before concluding, I wish to say a few words about an initiative that I believe has some significance for all of us. On a number of occasions since my arrival at the Secretariat, I have been approached by delegations and high officials from Member States regarding a common aspiration to designate a site of remembrance for victims of chemical weapons.
76. The idea has naturally enough been presented with a number of different contours and points of emphasis, and we are carefully considering how best to take forward the various suggestions that have been made to us. However, beyond these practical and political considerations, I have also sensed in each one of these exchanges a common feeling that the international community must remember both those who have been killed in chemical weapons attacks and those who are still suffering from the dreadful effects of this scourge.
77. There was also a shared recognition that such a commemoration should not only serve to remind us of past horrors, of which there have been so many—it should also be a source of inspiration for the contributions the Convention and the OPCW are making and will continue to make to peace and security the world over. On this basis, efforts to institute an International Day of Remembrance or Commemoration for the Victims of Chemical Weapons have been gaining momentum.
78. The possibility of dedicating a memorial at an appropriate site in The Hague has also been welcomed as an appropriate mark of respect and remembrance for future generations. We have been in touch with the authorities in The Hague, and they have indicated that they are favourably disposed to the idea.
79. I hope this initiative will meet with the approval of the Conference.
80. As I come to the end of my message, I wish to reconfirm before this assembly my own personal commitment, and that of all the women and men of the Secretariat, to stay the course in the effective discharge of our responsibilities, according to the mandate that emanates from the Convention. I personally undertake to continue to strive, in our work, for excellence, full transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination.
81. The Tenth Session of the Conference is now underway. Let it serve as another occasion on which to confirm our tradition of consensus-based decision-making built around a commonality of views. I wish you every success in your deliberations. Thank you.