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**THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

**STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA  
AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF  
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Excellency, the Director-General of the OPCW,  
Excellencies, Heads of Delegation,

At the outset, I am pleased to congratulate H.E. Mr Peter Goosen, Ambassador of South Africa, on his election as Chairperson of this Conference and I wish him every success. I assure him of the cooperation of my delegation for the success of this session. I also congratulate the elected members of the Bureau and wish them all success.

I should not fail to commend H.E. Mr Paul Arkwright, worthy Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for his efforts during his chairmanship of the previous session of the Conference.

As you are all aware, this conference comes shortly after this year's celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. That event was not just an occasion for us to take stock with satisfaction of what has been achieved, but it has also instilled in us the hope to build on these achievements in the future. I wish here to take this opportunity to thank H.E. the Director-General and his colleagues at the Technical Secretariat for their efforts for giving that event due international prominence.

My country attaches a paramount importance to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, based on its policy aiming at the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction under strict and effective international monitoring, in accordance with the first paragraph of the Preamble to the Convention. We are all aware that the importance of this Convention lies in ridding the world, fully and completely, of this type of weapons, which makes it a key element in strengthening international peace and security.

The commitment of the Kingdom to the Convention and to its implementation at the national and international levels reflects its steadfast policy aimed at the prohibition and non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction, given the threat that their existence poses to international peace and security. Likewise, the Kingdom accords careful attention to efforts made for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction at the regional level, aiming at making the Middle East region free of these lethal weapons. My country has reiterated, on several occasions, its call to the international community to contribute to



achieving this objective, which represents a legitimate right of the peoples of the region, and is undisputedly a key factor that would strengthen regional and international peace and security. In this context, my country expresses its regret that the international conference on the establishment of a region free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which was due to be held in Helsinki later this year, has been put off. For us, holding this conference would have been important for advancing the peace process by strengthening security and stability in the Middle East.

At the national level, the Kingdom has been among the first States to apply the requirements and provisions of the Convention, notably the establishment of a national authority tasked with the follow-up of the implementation of the Convention, and the promulgation of its legislation and regulations for the implementation thereof. The Kingdom continued developing its national regulations, until such efforts were crowned with the establishment of an independent national authority for the implementation of all conventions on the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, which commenced its work recently, following the promulgation of the Supreme Royal Order on its establishment and its provision with the human and financial resources required for its work.

There is no doubt that the failure to complete the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles is a source of concern for us all. We hope that possessor States will meet their obligations as early as possible and take the measures stipulated in the relevant decision taken by the Conference of the States Parties at its previous session. The destruction plans submitted by the concerned States Parties show their commitment and transparency in this respect. The completion of destruction of the said stockpiles as early as possible will indisputably mark a watershed in the history of the Organisation, and will serve the interest of all. If the Organisation is to move forward and widen its horizons with respect to its future priorities, the issue of the completion of destruction needs to be resolved effectively, and the measures required for ensuring the non-emergence and non-proliferation of chemical weapons need also to be taken. In this context, I wish to commend the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW for its important role in the verification of destruction activities. This role needs to be strengthened in order for the Secretariat to maintain the required level of performance. We also commend the role of the Secretariat in conducting the required verification activities of this year. In this respect, we welcome the efforts made by the Director-General to conclude the Supplementary Arrangement to the Relationship Agreement with the United Nations.

Our Organisation has undoubtedly made great efforts to promote the implementation of the Convention, particularly with regard to Articles VII, X and XI thereof. The Third Review Conference will provide a good and necessary opportunity for moving forward with evaluating and strengthening these efforts, particularly in the development of skills and capacities in the areas of protection, response to assistance requests, and other areas pertaining to the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes and to facilitating the transfer of related technical materials and equipment. Achieving these objectives is a priority for many developing countries aspiring to develop their own chemical industry and economy. In this respect, while we commend its efforts in the provision of technical assistance to foster the national implementation of the Convention, we look forward to the Secretariat redoubling these efforts, in order for it to contribute to capacity-building and development of skills in the relevant legislation and the ways to enforce such legislation at the national level.

In addition to its role in the protection against chemical weapons, the Convention affirms the importance of fostering international cooperation in the use of chemicals for purposes that are

beneficial to humanity, in line with the requirements of Article XI thereof. Although progress has been achieved, more remains to be done for the effective implementation of the requirements of this Article, especially in the transfer of technology and expertise relating to chemical industries, to developing countries, as many industrialised countries still impose unjustified restrictions in this respect. The Second Review Conference, held in The Hague in 2008, under my country's chairmanship, affirmed the importance of the full implementation of the requirements of this Article, which would contribute to strengthening global economic development, and benefit all parties, especially at the present juncture when the whole world suffers economic difficulties, and a complex financial crisis is still casting its dark shadow on most parts of the globe. Tackling up this crisis and mitigating its effects, especially on developing countries, will undisputedly require stronger international cooperation in various areas.

We can all agree that, since the adoption of the action plan for the universality of the Convention, in October 2003, much has been achieved in this regard. Membership of the Convention stands at 188 States, representing 98% of the world population. This is also a praiseworthy achievement and undisputedly reflects the wide international respect for the convention and the firm endorsement of its noble objectives, namely protecting mankind from the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons.

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation commends the Secretariat's public diplomacy efforts, while nonetheless reaffirming the importance of strengthening them, for outreach activities should not be limited to specialists, to those concerned with disarmament and to governmental delegates, but should go farther to reach out to ordinary citizens. We need to spare no effort to raise awareness of the Convention and its main object.

Finally, I thank Your Excellency, and I wish our session total success. I wish also to request that this statement be considered as one of the official documents of this Conference.

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