

**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF SINGAPORE**

**DELIVERED BY H.E. ONG ENG CHUAN**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SINGAPORE**

**AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES**

**THE HAGUE, 26 NOVEMBER 2012**

Introduction

Mr Chairman

It is my honour to address the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP). I wish to congratulate you on your appointment as the Chairman of the Seventeenth CSP, and I am sure that the Conference will proceed smoothly under your leadership.

2 I would also like to express Singapore's appreciation to the Director-General, His Excellency Ahmet Üzümcü, for his outstanding stewardship of the OPCW.

Universality

3 This year, we celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The CWC is one of the most successful multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, with 188 States Parties to the Convention to date. The States Parties to the Convention account for roughly 98% of the global population. The steadfast efforts and commitment of the OPCW and States Parties to implementation of the Convention have been key to its success. Nevertheless, we will not be satisfied until the remaining eight States have joined the Convention.

Destruction of Chemical Weapons Stockpiles

4 Singapore is pleased to note that more than 75% of the world's declared chemical weapons stockpile has been verifiably destroyed. We also note that although the two largest possessor states

have missed the deadline for destruction, they have publicly stated their commitment<sup>1</sup> to destroy their entire stockpile of chemical weapons. We urge them and all other possessor states to fulfil this key obligation as soon as possible in order to protect the integrity of the Convention.

#### Commitment to Prevent Re-emergence of Chemical Weapons

5 As we approach the complete elimination of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles, we also shift our focus from demilitarisation to the prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons. Singapore, being a non-possessor state, is committed to the verification and implementation measures under the Convention.

#### National Implementation Measures

6 Singapore constantly reviews our legislation and procedures to ensure that they remain relevant and are aligned with international best practices. Earlier this year, we updated our Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act, to allow the disclosure to government agencies of information given pursuant to the Convention for the purpose of ensuring the security of Singapore

7 The National Authority for the administration of the Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act, Singapore Customs, recognises the importance of active outreach in assisting the chemical industry to meet the requirements under the Convention. We actively partner with trade associations to reach out to the industry in order to educate companies on responsibilities and requirements under the Convention.

8 We are grateful to be given the opportunity by the OPCW to share on our national implementation measures in the second issue of the OPCW publication – “OPCW Today”. Singapore would like to commend the OPCW for creating greater awareness of the CWC and to encourage the sharing of best practices amongst National Authorities through such a platform.

9 Singapore actively participates in regional training programmes to learn and share best practices, and to reinforce our national implementation measures. In June 2012, Singapore Customs

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by US Delegation to the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the OPCW Executive Council, 25 Sep 2012; Statement by Deputy Head of the Russian Federal Department for Safe Storage and Destruction of Chemical Weapons reported in Itar-Tass on 22 Aug 2012.

attended the “Tenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia” held in Colombo, and presented on its role in enhancing the implementation of the CWC<sup>2</sup>.

#### Submissions of Article VI Declarations

10 Singapore recognises the importance of the timely submission of Article VI declarations towards the verification regime. In this regard, we have made every effort to ensure timely and accurate submissions of declarations to the Technical Secretariat. Our National Authority attended the “Training Course for National Authorities of States Parties in Asia involving in fulfilling Article VI Declaration Requirements of the Chemical Weapon Convention” and benefitted greatly from the course.

11 We are pleased to note that the OPCW has recently rolled out a new version of the Electronic Declaration tool for National Authorities (EDNA), which Singapore has implemented for our declarations since 2010. We welcome such initiatives to streamline and simplify the declaration process.

#### Assistance and Protection

12 Singapore supports and contributes to the assistance and protection programmes under Article X of the Convention. We conducted two runs of the “Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents course for Asian States Parties” in 2009 and 2011. We are glad to play a part in enhancing the response capabilities of participating countries towards chemical incidents. The third run of the course is scheduled for April 2013.

#### International Cooperation

13 Singapore is proud to organise and host the upcoming joint Seventh Singapore International Symposium on Protection against Toxic Substances and the Third International Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Explosives Operations Conference (7<sup>th</sup> SISPAT – 3<sup>rd</sup> ICOC), which will be held from 4-7 December this year. We hope that the symposium will be a useful platform to share and promote knowledge and experiences concerning operations and incidents, emerging protective technologies

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<sup>2</sup> The Tenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of State Parties in Asia, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 26-28 June 2012 – The meeting evaluated the status of CWC implementation within the Asia group. The NA(CWC) shared on the use of Singapore’s TradeNet system as an effective and efficient tool for the collation of trade data for annual declarations.

and measures against CBRN threats. We look forward to the keynote speech to be delivered by His Excellency Ahmet Üzümcü at the conference.

#### Future Priorities

14 It has been fifteen years since the inception of the CWC, and we commend the OPCW and States Parties for constantly striving to ensure that the CWC remains relevant and practicable to implement for now, as well as for the future. In this regard, we look forward to fruitful discussions at the Third Review Conference, which is scheduled to be held in April 2013.

#### Conclusion

15 While the CWC has achieved many notable successes, we continue to remind ourselves that we have yet to reach the ultimate goal of a world without chemical weapons. It is also crucial that we continue to strive for universal acceptance of the CWC.

16 Singapore is confident that with the full support of all Member States and the tireless efforts of the OPCW, we will be able to achieve a more secure world for future generations.

17 I wish you and all distinguished delegates present here today, a successful Conference.

Thank you.