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**URUGUAY**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF URUGUAY  
AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

Allow me to sincerely congratulate you on your election as President of the Conference of the States Parties for the present session. You may count on the support of my delegation. I would also like to take the opportunity to express our appreciation to Ambassador Paul Arkwright of the United Kingdom for the appropriate way in which he led the Sixteenth Session in a scenario crucial to the OPCW.

I also want to acknowledge the work of Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü. His handling of the issues on our agenda has always been characterised by his transparency and collaboration with the States Parties. In his third participation in the Conference as OPCW Director-General, I wish to convey to him the support of Uruguay so that he may continue to carry out his work successfully.

Uruguay considers the Convention to be a model example of multilateral disarmament and non proliferation treaty. It is a very useful tool towards achieving peace and international security. It is, therefore, committed to the principles and objectives of the Convention.

Paradoxically, OPCW's success in the achievement of its core objective could turn against it, at least in respect to its future institutional structure and operative dimensions. It was, precisely, during the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties that the delegation of Uruguay underlined the international community's growing and firm support to the OPCW which translates, for example, in the fact that it has been setting standards not equalled by any other multilateral mechanisms for disarmament and non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It makes what may be a unique and highly significant contribution to an international scenario characterised by the lack of progress in the nuclear and biological fields. In this regard, it is worthwhile remembering that the 1992 Convention still constitutes the sole multilateral instrument that prohibits for all states, without exception, an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. It is, therefore, in the capacity to continue to provide a significant input to the strengthening of peace and international security. However, once the process of total destruction of declared chemical weapons nears completion the Organisation's level of activity, particularly those related to inspections, could be significantly reduced. For this reason, OPCW has begun the so called "transition phase", fifteen years after entry into force of the Convention (1997) during which, three quarters of the declared arsenals and numerous facilities have been dismantled or converted to peaceful



uses. In simple words, the crucial and present issue of OPCW relates to the ways in which it will be able to continue to fulfil its mission in the face of challenges that are different to those that characterised the international scene in 1992—challenges which are tangible in four different contexts: The emergence of new chemical agents not included in the Convention's schedules of chemicals; the use of incapacitating agents in particular situations; the innovations of the chemical industry to satisfy requirements of economic development, the growth of agriculture and the improvement of public health; and the need to implement resolution 1540 of the United Nation's Security Council (2004) which comprises of measures to prevent the manufacture, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical or biological agents and their means of delivery by non state agents.

If it is true that the Convention has been ratified by 188 States, full universality continues to be one of the main goals to be achieved which are basically dependent on the evolution of events that may take place in the zones of influence of the seven states which are not parties to the Convention. It is now time to approach this issue patiently but continuously and deal with each case according to its own specificity taking advantage of every possible opportunity to underline that there is no plausible justification for a state to follow the path of chemical holocaust.

OPCW's main cause of success may be the credibility of its verification regime as well as the mutual trust among States Parties generated by the shared objective of achieving "a world free of chemical weapons". In this regard we acknowledge the huge progress in the field of verification, however, although it is true that national implementation has made progress through legislative and administrative measures, there is still much to be achieved in every region of the world.

The delegation of Uruguay supports the Director-General's budget proposal as supported, in turn, by the Executive Council during its Seventieth Session. It represents a sincere effort to reinforce in a balanced manner the pillars of the Convention: Verification, Cooperation, Assistance and Protection. We hope that the creation of a new Office of Strategy and Policy will continue the important support to the work of the Director-General in the face of the new challenges confronting the Organisation.

On this basis, Uruguay supports the strengthening of mechanisms activities and programmes undertaken by the Technical Secretariat for the promotion of the peaceful uses of chemistry. In an additional show of support to the provisions of Article XI of the Convention, last month Uruguay hosted a workshop-seminar that brought together (33) high ranking officials from governments of the region. Experts, representative of academia, researchers and industry representatives also participated. It was an opportunity to identify effective measures that will enable progress in the strengthening of programs related with international cooperation and chemical safety. The Montevideo meeting ended with a set of recommendations that we hope will be followed through by the Technical Secretariat through the facilitation or through our distinguished colleague from Pakistan. We hope that the recommendations will be useful for other regions in their effort to carry out activities under Article XI of the Convention.

We do not ignore the need to assume the work of this Conference as well as the work of the Third Review Conference which will bring us together again in this room next year on the basis of initiatives geared to generate the necessary consensus and in the exchange of ideas and experiences. We also believe that the value of the Convention lies in the Articles that set

the rights and the obligations of States Parties. Their fundamental value is to build a single unit which would go beyond the simple addition of its individual components.

In that context, I wish to express the willingness of my country to collaborate with the efforts of States Parties in the OPCW and with the Technical Secretariat for the establishment of an Associated Regional Centre devoted to the training, information and dissemination of measures against chemical weapons in the national territory or in cooperation with other countries in the region. To end, allow me to welcome the reestablishment of the regional balance in the top structure of the Technical Secretariat by welcoming the new Legal Advisor Alberto E. Dojas from Argentina and the Director of the Inspectorate, Marcelo Kos from Brazil, who will use their knowledge and experience to provide excellence and efficiency to the work of the Technical Secretariat. I also take advantage of this opportunity to greet Directors Konstantin Gavrilov and Mark Albon from Policy-Making Organs and International Cooperation and Assistance respectively, for some time now they have been supporting the Member States of the OPCW with distinction and diligence.

We wish that this speech be distributed as an official document of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

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