



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Seventeenth Session
26 – 30 November 2012

C-17/NAT.14
27 November 2012
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

REPUBLIC OF CUBA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. ZELMYS MARIA DOMINGUEZ CORTINA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Thank you, Mr Chairperson,

The delegation of the Republic of Cuba would like to welcome you as Chairperson of this Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and express to you our confidence in your leadership to guide this session to a successful conclusion. We should also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Vice-Chairs of the Conference of the States Parties and the Chairperson of the Plenary Committee.

The delegation of Cuba fully supports the statement made by the honourable representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and China which are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and, at the same time, would like to highlight certain aspects which it considers to be of great interest.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction represents a serious threat to international peace and security. Cuba reiterates its position in favour of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, which includes the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

The destruction of all categories of chemical weapons remains one of the fundamental objectives of the Convention and must be achieved as soon as possible, in accordance with the relevant decisions approved by the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council. The credibility and integrity of the Convention would otherwise be at risk

The delegation of Cuba appreciates the information provided by the Technical Secretariat on the status of implementation of Article XI and the efforts being made by the International Cooperation and Assistance Division.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has an important role to play in the economic and technological development of the States Parties, developing countries in particular.

Unfortunately, the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI of the Convention is still pending.



The non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention involves the absence of restrictions among States Parties which go beyond those established in the Convention itself. All States Parties have a legitimate right to participate in the fullest exchange of materials, equipment and information in the field of chemistry for purposes not prohibited by the Convention, and at the same time, all States Parties are obligated to facilitate this exchange.

It is both inconceivable and unacceptable for some States to establish unilateral measures which limit, restrict and even prohibit, in many cases, a free exchange between States Parties in this domain. The sanction imposed on Cuba by the Government of the United States for more than fifty years represents a flagrant violation of this multilateral treaty, particularly Article XI thereof. It is therefore imperative to eliminate these discriminatory restrictions, including the sanction on Cuba, which are contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Cuba considers it urgent and essential to adopt a Plan of Action as soon as possible for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI, as has been done with other Articles of the Convention. Our country will shortly submit a concrete proposal in this regard for consideration by the other States Parties.

This delegation wishes to recognise the efforts made by the Secretariat and the States Parties in holding the regional and annual meetings of National Authorities and, at the same time, would like to endorse the priorities agreed at the last regional meeting of States Parties of the GRULAC region, which was held in Costa Rica.

The Third Conference to Review the Chemical Weapons Convention presents a unique opportunity to re-establish the basic principles and objectives of the Convention and to adopt agreements which will have significant implications for the future of the Convention, while still maintaining the balance of its four fundamental pillars: destruction, verification, international cooperation and assistance.

Cuba reiterates its commitment to continuing to work closely with all the States Parties in a transparent, inclusive and constructive manner to achieve a positive result at the Review Conference which will strengthen the Convention further.

A multilateral approach to disarmament is the only effective and sustainable way to maintain international peace and security.

We reaffirm to you the support of this delegation to achieve the anticipated results during this session of the Conference of the States Parties.

We request that this document be distributed as an official document of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Thank you very much.