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**THE PHILIPPINES**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR LOURDES G. MORALES  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE  
ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF  
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

1. My delegation wishes to join the other States Parties in congratulating Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa on his election as Chairperson of the Seventeenth Conference of the States Parties. Ambassador Goosen, you have our full support at working for the success of this year's Conference.
2. Please allow me to extend my delegation's congratulations and appreciation to the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Paul Arkwright, for his outstanding work as Chairman of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Our congratulations also go to the newly-elected Vice Chairpersons of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference.
3. Fifteen years after its entry into force, the Chemical Weapons Convention has made great strides in its primary goal of eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction through the almost total destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons.
4. The success of the Convention comes from the commitment of its Member States to achieving complete destruction and non-proliferation of chemical weapons. Although some possessor States have not been able to meet the final extended deadline for the total destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons, these have shown good faith in complying with their obligation under the Convention by providing regular updates on their destruction activities and timelines for the completion of these activities.
5. As we engage in preparations for the Third Review Conference of the Convention in 2013, please allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, Her Excellency Nassima Baghli of Algeria, and to the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, for holding regular meetings to identify and evaluate the issues that will be relevant to the Review Conference. The discussions of the Open-Ended Working Group have provided valuable inputs on how to make the Convention relevant and responsive to the needs of its Member States in increasingly challenging times.



6. My delegation associates itself with the statement of His Excellency Mohammad Mahdi Akhoundzadeh, Deputy Minister for International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, particularly its focus on the importance of achieving universality of the Convention and on the fostering of international cooperation.
7. The current membership of 188 countries is an achievement in itself, representing as it does 98% of the world's population, but we cannot stop short of universality.
8. My delegation therefore supports the efforts of the OPCW towards gaining the membership of States which are as yet not Parties to the Convention.
9. My delegation is one with other States Parties in strongly urging these States to become Parties to the Convention in order to realise universality of the Convention.
10. After making great strides in its goal of complete destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, the continuing relevance of the Convention will depend on its ability to look beyond what it has achieved and to intensely examine the emerging international security environment, post-destruction, and innovatively and creatively respond to its needs.
11. My delegation wishes to emphasise the importance of peaceful uses of chemistry and of international cooperation in support of Member States' activities in this area, particularly revolving on education and research, and on economic and technological development.
12. Please allow me to express my delegation's appreciation for the support given by the OPCW to the Philippine National Authority's participation in workshops and training courses in Malaysia, Qatar and Sri Lanka. My delegation wishes to thank the Governments of Malaysia, Qatar and Sri Lanka for their hosting of these workshops.
13. My delegation would also like to thank the Organisation for the financial support it extended to the Twenty-Seventh Philippine Chemistry Congress, the Third Regional Electrochemistry Meeting of South-East Asia and the Asia-Pacific Conference on Analytical Science which was held in Manila on 11 to 13 April 2012. A total of 422 participants, coming from different regions, attended the Conference.
14. Through OPCW sponsorship, the Conference was able to achieve its objective of engendering interaction among the members of academe to discuss recent developments in the field of chemistry.

Mr Chairperson,

15. Once again, my delegation wishes to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Conference and would like to reaffirm our commitment to ensuring the success of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.
16. I would like to request that this statement be issued as an official document of this session of the Conference.

Thank you.