



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Eighteenth Session  
2 – 5 December 2013

C-18/NAT.13  
2 December 2013  
ENGLISH only

**MALAYSIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR FAUZIAH MOHAMAD TAIB  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA  
TO THE OPCW AT THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairman,  
Mr Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates,

No one could have predicted the recent turn of events that led the OPCW to focus from one direction to another. It was only in the spring of this year that the Third Review Conference discussed at length the future of this Organisation. Some said we were at a transition, some felt we were at a crossroad, while others thought the OPCW was moving into the oblivious and looking for a role that would make it remain relevant. We discussed at length the establishment of a knowledge management centre that would make the OPCW a global depository of knowledge and expertise on all matters concerning chemical weapons disarmament. We also made provisions for educational and outreach programmes to ensure that more people outside this Organisation understand the value of our contribution to a world free of chemical weapons.

That was in April. Look at where we are now—winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Committee's recognition of the OPCW's work in the advancement of peace and security is better than any outreach programme we could have devised.

My delegation congratulates the Director-General, Mr Ahmet Üzümcü, for his tireless work in the running of this Organisation. We congratulate his dedicated and diligent staff who have worked tenaciously with him to make this Organisation an entity to be reckoned with—from the office administration who are the spine of any organisation to the inspectors on the field who apply their expertise with due diligence to this Convention of ours. Each and every one of the OPCW family has contributed to the success of this Organisation. This is a Nobel Prize 10 years in the making, awarded as the prize committee chairman described: "because of (the OPCW's) long-standing efforts to eliminate chemical weapons" and not just for events that happened this past year. And so we salute those who came before us, who put us onto this historic path.

We welcome Somalia and Syria to this re-born Organisation. Their membership has led this Organisation to the last steps towards universality. We urge the handful of States that are still



outside it to come in from the cold and join us at the hearth of peace. Together, we can finally relegate chemical weapons to the pages of history.

Cooperation is not merely consigned to liberals' rallying cries. We have seen how the OPCW inspectors and security personnel of the United Nations have undertaken joint missions in Syria to ensure that all traces of chemical weapons in that country are accounted for, dismantled, and ready for destruction. They work under difficult conditions and in a fragile security environment. Yet, it is a pleasant sight to see how the two flags can fly together however the winds may blow.

States Parties have been generous in contributing to the trust funds set up to assist Syria verify and destroy all its chemical weapons. We hope that the destruction taking place outside Syria's territory is done in a manner that is not detrimental to human security and the environment and under the most stringent supervision of the OPCW. I would like to flag, at this point that any arrangements or agreements we make here must not be in violation of any of the States Parties' or other international obligations such as the UNCLOS or the UNFCCC.

No matter how we justify it, it needs to be said that the Convention has been breached. The very first article of the Convention says inter alia, that States Parties are never to undertake under any circumstances the transfer, directly or indirectly, of chemical weapons to anyone. Article IV (paragraph 16) states that each State Party shall meet the costs of destruction of chemical weapons it is obliged to destroy.

Yet the Convention has been breached on the grounds of extraordinary circumstances. We need to be extremely careful whenever we use 'extraordinary circumstances' to mitigate the breach. The Convention that we are party to is a contract of which all the terms and conditions—and even the loopholes—must be crystal clear to the signatories. It must never become a shield for the strong and a mockery for the weak, nor should we allow its continued violation and abuse. Continual exceptions would leave the Convention an empty shell with only the pedestal of morality to stand on.

The Executive Council is an important organ of the Organisation. Its role is to ensure the effective functioning of the Convention. But the Convention determines that there will only be 41 members in the Executive Council out of the 190 States Parties. The Convention also provides special privileges for 16 States Parties to become almost perpetual members leaving the rest of the world to scramble for the remaining 25 seats in the Council. For example, currently, the voices of more than 650 million people representing the South-east Asian States Parties are not heard in the Executive Council, as they are not represented in the Council. Surely, Mr Chairman, there must be some sacrifices on the part of some States Parties to give up their seats periodically so that others may have a fair chance to participate. From time to time we should open the windows to let fresh air in.

Mr Chairman, Malaysia is a small country and can only help meet the objectives of the Convention in our affordable way. For the year 2014, our National Authority will continue its partnership programme with Sudan. We stand ready to host a specific training programme for Myanmar in our effort to encourage universality of the Convention. We will conduct a workshop under the assistance and protection programme of the ICA; a regional course for custom authorities of Asia; and assure the support of two Malaysian companies to host trainees under the Associate Programme. These programmes are over and above several outreach programmes Malaysia will undertake for its own people.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates,

The OPCW is well on its way to fulfilling its duties in a world free of chemical weapons. It has done so by adhering to international law—that unbreakable tenet that guarantees us predictability and security in a global community. I am reminded here of Tennyson’s poem:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that could be;  
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;  
Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furl’d  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the World.  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

I request that this statement be included as an official document of this Conference.

Thank you.

- - - 0 - - -