

Madam Chair, Director-General, Madam Deputy Director-General, other OPCW Division Directors, OPCW Staff, and esteemed Representatives of States Parties, and fellow CWC Coalition representatives

May I first congratulate the OPCW and the Director-General on being the recipients of the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the OPCW for providing the opportunity for NGO presentations during these Conferences. Too often it is forgotten or overlooked that people in communities are directly impacted by the Treaty obligations of their governments often without a voice in where, when and how these obligations are to be carried out.

It was to give voice to these civil societies that I formed the Chemical Weapons Working Group consisting of citizens and NGOs in the U.S., the Pacific and Russia in 1990.

Emphasizing protection of the health of the public and the environment, while undertaking the safe destruction of chemical weapons was, and remains, our primary objective.

However, we recognized that while struggling to ensure these goals, that the effort to implement the Convention was equally important. That is why, in spite of the strategic value that may have been realized in the dispute over technologies in the U.S., the CWWG openly and enthusiastically supported ratification of the Treaty by the U.S. Senate in 1997 and has been credited with delivering several key votes during the controversial ratification process.

It is the recognition of this unique effort, the first of its kind, to rid the planet of an entire class of Weapons of Mass Destruction, that propelled us to not only support the Treaty, but to work for its adoption.

I am pleased to say, coming from the final chemical weapons destruction site in the U.S., that there continues to be outstanding progress towards our mutual final objective. Construction at the Blue Grass, Kentucky

disposal facility is now 90% complete with Systemization approximately 30% complete.

Importantly, unlike two decades ago, since the government program has adopted the approach in which civil society plays a fully participatory and intimate role, the progress has encountered little controversy and no legal challenges. All regulatory requirements are being met or surpassed AND challenges that historically would likely have caused antagonism between the project and the community have been cooperatively dealt with in reaching acceptable resolutions.

It is the considered opinion of the NGO community that on the current trajectory, completion of operations at Blue Grass, the 7th and last chemical weapons stockpile in the US, could occur before the official projected completion date of 2023.

In closing, let me state again my appreciation for this opportunity and reemphasize the distinctiveness of what this Body is close to achieving – global disarmament concerning chemical weapons. Each member should believe this is a model for future success in efforts to do likewise with other weapons of mass destruction.

I thank you for your contribution to a more civil and peaceful world. And I kindly ask that this statement be made part of the final CSP record.