



*The Hague*

**Statement of the Philippines  
at the 19th Session of the Conference of the States Parties  
by Ambassador Jaime Victor B. Ledda  
Permanent Representative of the Philippines  
to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons  
02 December 2014**

Madame Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

My delegation wishes to join other States Parties in warmly congratulating Your Excellency Vesela Mrden Korac, the Ambassador of Croatia, on your election as Chairperson of the 19th Session of the Conference of States Parties. I would like to express our full confidence and support in Your Excellency in ensuring the success of this year's Conference.

I would also like to extend my delegation's sincerest congratulations and appreciation to the outgoing Chairperson, His Excellency Sa'ad Abdul Majeed Ibrahim Al-Ali, the Ambassador of Iraq, for his exemplary work in the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference.

I am pleased to acknowledge and congratulate as well the newly-elected Vice-Chairpersons for this year.

Madame Chairperson,

One hundred years ago, the world witnessed the first large-scale use of chemical weapons. One hundred years hence, much has been done to achieve chemical disarmament and non-proliferation, but much still needs to be done to prevent the resurgence of the use of chemical weapons, especially by non-state actors.

As it enters its seventeenth year as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and a member of the OPCW, the Philippines reaffirms its strong commitment to the implementation of the Convention and the work of the OPCW.

The Philippines wishes to work together with the OPCW in attaining its goal of universality, developing initiatives in disaster risk reduction and promoting education and public awareness on chemical safety and security.

Madame Chairperson,

The Philippine delegation expresses its sincerest appreciation to His Excellency Ahmet Uzumcu, Director General of the OPCW, the officers and personnel of the OPCW Technical Secretariat who have all been hardworking, unfazed and undaunted in pursuing the objectives of the convention no matter how difficult or perilous the work may be.

My delegation also commends His Excellency, Alvaro Marcelo Moerzinger Pagani, Ambassador of Uruguay, for his pro-active and untiring efforts as Chair of the Executive Council in guiding it through a remarkably busy and challenging year for the organization.

Madame Chairperson,

The Philippines associates itself with the Statement of His Excellency, Dr. Alireza Jahangiri, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement-CWC member states and China. I take this opportunity to thank Iran who has acted as Chair for the group from 2012 to 2015 for displaying effective leadership and coordination among the NAM-CWC member states and China.

Indeed, the universality of the CWC is essential in achieving international peace and security. My delegation strongly encourages non-member states to become Parties to the Convention so that our collective dream of its universality may be realized. My delegation likewise underscores the importance of fostering international cooperation and participation in technical assistance programs.

Madame Chairperson,

I would like to update the Conference on the efforts of the Philippines towards the enactment of national legislation to effectively implement the CWC.

On 20 October 2014, the Philippine Senate passed The Chemical Weapons Prohibition Bill after its Third Reading. A counterpart bill in the House of Representatives is currently under deliberation on First Reading.

Once enacted, a separate bureau to be known as the Philippine National Authority for the Chemical Weapons Convention will be established to serve as the national coordinating body and lead agency in the implementation of the CWC.

In a related matter, the Philippines is finalizing its National Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Action Plan with the help of the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and experts from international organizations.

The Anti-Terrorism Council-Program Management Center, the current Philippine National Authority, hopes to have this National CBRN Action Plan approved by the Office of the President in 2015. This will enable the national government and other stakeholders to take a unified approach in building capacity to counteract the risks associated with CBRN materials.

Furthermore, priority actions for enhancing capabilities to prevent, detect, prepare for and respond to CBRN incidents and disasters are being formulated.

This year, the Philippine government has stressed the importance of chemical safety and security in both school and work environments.

This year has also seen several initiatives undertaken by government agencies, universities and the private sector, all cooperating to promote greater awareness in chemical safety and security not only among professionals in laboratories but also among the youth in their classrooms.

My delegation therefore expresses keen interest in the OPCW's initiatives on educational and outreach programs as well as the best practices of Member States in this area.

Madame Chairperson,

The Philippine delegation would like to thank the OPCW, together with the country's multilateral and bilateral partners, for the readiness to offer assistance and cooperation to the Philippines which, like similarly situated Member States, wishes to move forward in fulfilling its obligations under the CWC.

The Philippine delegation looks forward to working closely with the OPCW Technical Secretariat so that we may build on this growing momentum in the Philippines to increase public awareness and preparedness, as well as to enhance stakeholder support and involvement.

In closing, I respectfully request that this Statement be issued as an official document of this Conference.

Thank you.

