



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Nineteenth Session
1 – 5 December 2014

C-19/NAT.8
1 December 2014
ENGLISH only

MALAYSIA

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

Madam Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

The year 2014 was not a particularly good year for Malaysia, at least in terms of aviation. Yet despite this, Malaysia's National Authority managed to proceed on an upward track, achieving more than even the year before. In Sabah and Sarawak in the East of Malaysia, and in Penang, the Pearl of the Orient, eight workplaces were identified for national inspections, ensuring that the data Malaysia submits to the OPCW on the production, import and export activities of Schedule III chemicals are up to date and current.

Thanks to the generous funding from the Government of Japan, and expertise assistance from the OPCW Secretariat, Malaysia's National Authority took the lead in organising an awareness programme on the Chemical Weapons Convention in Myanmar in August of this year. We hope that such programmes will encourage Myanmar to join the Chemical Weapons Convention club and inch us closer towards our goal of universality.

In June, the National Authority participated in a partnership programme with Sudan, while two Malaysian companies hosted the OPCW's Associate Programme in 2014. We have heard nothing but glowing feedback about this flagship programme.

In addition, Malaysia's National Authority hosted a regional workshop on Article X of the Convention and issues of regional cooperation in the areas of assistance and emergency response in Kuala Lumpur two months ago. We believe that to some extent the Regional Workshops achieved their objective to strengthen and improve States' capability in implementing the Convention, at the same time providing an opportunity to enhance the Member States' awareness and understanding as well as their obligations of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Like last year and the year before that, my delegation has highlighted, and will not fail to continue to highlight, how important the Executive Council is as an organ of the Organisation. Its role is to ensure the effective functioning of the Convention. Unfortunately, the Convention determines that at any one time, there will only be 41 members out of the 190 States Parties in the EC (the "Exclusive Club" so to speak). 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.



Like the child who hogs the swings at the playground and never learns to build the blocks of friendship, so too must the Council's membership change in order for there to be equity and amity. Malaysia believes that an environment of healthy competition, where different, interested States, are given a fair chance to serve on the Council, will only strengthen the Council. The principles of equitable geographical distribution, significance of chemical industry, and political and security interests should be our guidelines in this endeavour, as well as a State's willingness to actively participate and contribute to the discussions within the Council as a whole.

Of late, we have seen singular initiatives carried out by the Technical Secretariat. The Fact-Finding Mission on the alleged use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria is one, and the unprecedented intention to retain samples of Syria's chemical weapons at the Secretariat's laboratory is another. One wonders where these initiatives come from. My delegation believes that the Secretariat has to be exceedingly circumspect regarding great power interests before it takes any kind of initiative. We understand that this is not an easy task because that is how governments behave, but at least the Secretariat should strive, or convincingly appear to be impartial.

For the OPCW to be effective, it should take into consideration the interests and needs of all States, big or small. It goes without saying that the beauty about golfing is that no matter what your handicap is you can still have a good game together. Countries big or small can participate meaningfully towards the success of the OPCW if the agenda is not hijacked or sidetracked. A rusty nail placed near a faithful compass will sway it from the truth and wreck the argosy. We need to be back on track on the aims and purposes of the Organisation, not let it be diverted to other political purposes.

This Organisation is a functional, technical body, not a political entity. The more it focuses on its objectives—that is to free the world of chemical weapons—the more respectable it becomes.

As the year comes to a close, my delegation takes note of the progress made on the elimination of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. For whatever reasons one might continue to cite, this new State Party has shown us that it is not impossible to destroy one's stockpile in a very short period of time. But Syria could not have done this alone and its success story is testimony to the human will and our collective spirit. Churchill, FDR, and Spiderman shared the same wisdom when they said that "with great power comes great responsibilities", because Syria's success is attributed also to these willing and financially capable States Parties that have assisted in making this task possible.

Finally, let me express my personal satisfaction in seeing yet another crack in the glass ceiling. To Ambassador Vasela Mrđen Korać, Permanent Representative of Croatia - your chairmanship of this Nineteenth Conference of the States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention represents the light that is shining through the cracks that Hillary Clinton spoke about. More than that, Madam Chairman, your stature and experience will no doubt see this Conference through to a fruitful and successful culmination.

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