



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
TO THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES  
PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE  
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

1. I wish to convey to all of you my warmest welcome to the Second Special Session of the Conference of States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.
2. I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Waleed Ben Abdel Karim El Kherei, on your well-deserved election to chair the Second Review Conference and assure you of the full support of the Technical Secretariat.
3. The Conference represents an important opportunity for States Parties to take stock of the OPCW's progress and to provide strategic guidance for the future.
4. In conducting its review, as you, Mr Chairman, can recall, the Conference is expected also to consider the influence of external factors on our work, including, especially, developments in science and technology.
5. Intensive preparations in the Open-ended Working Group that was so ably chaired by Ambassador Lyn Parker of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have preceded the opening of the Conference. I commend him in particular, and the four Vice-Chairpersons, for the excellent work carried out during the preparatory period.
6. On its part, the Secretariat has endeavoured to facilitate consultations in the Working Group by providing a detailed overview of progress in all areas of its work. An updated version of the Secretariat's Working Paper (RC-2/S/1\*) has been submitted to the Conference.
7. The first part of the Working Paper contains my own assessment of the progress made in implementing our mandate and mission, and of the challenges that lie ahead. In that context, I have included some pointers and suggestions that the Second Review



Conference may wish to bear in mind as it considers the present and takes the long view.

8. The progress achieved over our first decade in strengthening and consolidating the multilateral system of chemical weapons prohibition represents a major accomplishment of the OPCW.
9. Over 3,000 inspections at over 1,080 military and industrial sites in 80 countries are proof of the wide acceptability, functionality and success of the Convention's verification regime – something that, 10 years ago, seemed an unprecedented and really daunting undertaking.
10. A membership of 183 countries in the very first decade of its operation and the concrete steps taken by a growing number of them to fully implement the Chemical Weapons Convention bear similar testimony to the overwhelming support for this Treaty.
11. Such progress brings us closer to the concrete goals of the Convention and underscores the feasibility of multilateralism and cooperation for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation.
12. We must now strengthen both our resolve to take greater strides and our determination to deal effectively with the challenges that the future holds for us.

Mr Chairman,

13. Let me briefly recall how all this is reflected in concrete terms in the implementation of the OPCW's core objectives.
14. A first and basic core objective of the OPCW is complete chemical disarmament.
15. So far, 26,538 metric tonnes of Category 1 chemical weapons, representing over 38% of the total, have been destroyed under OPCW verification. Fifty-two percent of the Category 2 chemical weapons have similarly been verified as destroyed, and all Category 3 chemical weapons have been completely eliminated from all inventories. The 65 chemical weapons production facilities (or CWPFs) declared to the OPCW by 12 States Parties have all been inactivated, with 94% of them having either been destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes.
16. Whilst it is true that just under two thirds of the chemical weapons stocks remain to be destroyed, we can count impressive results. One State Party, namely Albania, has already fulfilled its obligations, and two of them – India and A State Party – are, to their great credit, on the verge of doing so. Indeed, all possessor States have made good progress in terms of meeting all intermediate deadlines, and have stated time and again their commitment to comply with their obligation to destroy all chemical stockpiles in accordance with the Convention.
17. I should add that the destruction of the declared stockpiles has been materially the most demanding task in the first ten years of the OPCW, not only for the possessor States, which are constrained by legal deadlines and have encountered numerous

technological, financial and safety challenges, but also for the OPCW, which has dedicated 85% of its inspections efforts to this area.

18. Progress has also been made towards the complete destruction of old and abandoned chemical weapons (OACWs). These are two important matters under the Convention that demand significant technical and financial resources and, in the case of abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs), a delicate interaction between the States concerned.

Mr Chairman,

19. The second core objective of the OPCW is the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. This is a long-term fundamental goal, equally crucial to our ultimate success.
20. In this field, too, progress has been substantial with our system of industry verification through data monitoring and on-site inspections performing effectively, as envisaged in Article VI of the Convention.
21. The frequency of inspections for the three schedules has been particularly intense and can be gauged from the fact that the 28 inspectable Schedule 1 facilities have already been inspected 185 times. Similarly, all Schedule 2 facilities have been inspected 2.5 times per facility, and 50% of all Schedule 3 facilities have been inspected at least once. Since April 2000, the OPCW has inspected a total of 552 (around 12%) of the more than 4,500 inspectable other chemical production facilities (OCPFs).
22. But more than being mere statistics, these figures represent the fulfilment of a major objective of the Convention in terms of establishing an efficient verification system which, through its adaptation over time, would continue in the long term to serve its disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.
23. In the Secretariat's Working Paper, I have praised the drafters of the Convention for their vision and foresight. At this stage, allow me to extend my appreciation to all those men and women in possession and other States, and in the Verification and Inspectorate Divisions, as well as all others in the Technical Secretariat who are directly involved in the multifaceted and demanding job of translating that vision into the reality of eliminating the scourge of chemical weapons.
24. Overall, the degree of multilateral cooperation and international solidarity in the field of chemical disarmament has surpassed initial expectations and has considerably strengthened the Chemical Weapons Convention as a multilateral disarmament treaty.
25. Indeed, the success of the Convention depends to a good degree on a strong partnership among the various groups of States Parties that make up its membership. The spirit of cooperation and consensus building has played a crucial role in strengthening the OPCW and in advancing its mission.

Mr Chairman,

26. Assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for peaceful purposes as a

means for helping development, have also been defined by States Parties as core objectives and provide additional opportunities for promoting cooperation between our States Parties. Not surprisingly, these issues are of great importance, particularly for our members whose economies are under development or in transition.

27. As amply reflected in the documentation submitted by the Technical Secretariat to the Second Review Conference, the OPCW has been quite active on this front, and has allocated considerable financial resources, and, allow me to emphasize this point, has managed to attend to practically all specific requests by States Parties. Indeed, no request has been left unanswered.
28. Our ability to do so surely has benefited from the generous voluntary contributions from the individual States Parties and from the European Union that have also helped with expertise and training opportunities.
29. Quite distinctively, the Organisation has continued to enhance its ability to coordinate the delivery of emergency assistance through procurement, training, regional workshops, and exercises. The requests for sharing OPCW expertise in this area have increased significantly as a result of concerns about the possible resort by terrorists to chemicals, including, as seen in Baghdad last year, to non-scheduled ones.
30. With the aim of effectively advancing international cooperation under Article XI of the Convention, the OPCW has designed a broad range of programmes that focus on promoting compliance with the Treaty, as well as the enhancement of national capacities in the peaceful uses of chemistry.
31. The comprehensive nature of the Associate Programme, for example, is widely recognised as an outstanding success.
32. On the whole, 5,600 participants have so far benefited from over 500 programmes representing a wide array of activities.

Mr Chairman,

33. The prospects of realising the core objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation are to a considerable degree linked to our ability to attain two crucial supporting objectives, namely universal adherence to the Convention and the full and effective implementation by States Parties of the provisions of Article VII of the Treaty.
34. On both fronts we have made valuable progress since the First Review Conference; I have already referred to our considerable success in expanding our membership to 183 Member States.
35. Significant advances have been made in pursuance of the Action Plan on National Implementation, which clearly reflects a consensus about the critical nature of the obligations under article VII.
36. The results so far have been encouraging and compare favourably with implementation of similar obligations under comparable legal instruments. Almost all of our States Parties have now established or designated their National Authority, an

obligation that also helps States Parties in taking the next practical steps towards legal and administrative implementation measures.

37. The number of States Parties that have enacted comprehensive legislation has increased from approximately 50 in October 2003 to 81 at present. Another 44 States Parties have laws in place that cover some key areas.

Mr Chairman,

38. One further source of satisfaction, I believe, is that – whilst consistently and significantly increasing our activities – we have, as an institution, managed to remain lean, effective, and dynamic. This is the common success of States Parties and the Technical Secretariat, which share a strong commitment to key benchmarks such as excellence, optimising the use of resources, maximising cost-effectiveness, results-based budgeting, and the full implementation of the statutory personnel policies. Very specifically, the OPCW management remains firmly committed to best practices, transparency, and accountability.
39. In short, Mr Chairman, the last five years have seen the further maturing of the OPCW, including the ability of the policy-making bodies to take, by consensus, decisions not just on technical, but also on important political issues.
40. As a result, the OPCW has noticeably improved its international standing, opening possibilities for enhanced cooperation with other international organisations in order to better serve the needs of our members, not least in the areas of assistance, protection, and international cooperation.
41. Our cooperation with the United Nations and its agencies is a logical outcome of the common quest to promote peace and security as envisaged under the UN Charter. It is also the recognition by the UN of the importance of the OPCW's work in the face of new threats to international security. This is evident in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), which defines obligations for all UN members in similar terms to those of our own Convention, as well as in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in September 2006 by the UN General Assembly.
42. More concretely, the OPCW is contributing to the effective advancement of global disarmament and non-proliferation for an entire class of weapons of mass destruction, in sharp contrast, which is to be regretted, to the lengthy paralysis prevailing in relation to other categories of such weapons.

Mr Chairman,

43. In my view, there are, therefore, many good reasons to feel encouraged, and I think this is a view shared by many.
44. But, of course, this should not lead to complacency. There remains a lot to be done before our core objectives are accomplished. We must continue to ensure progress on all fronts.

45. In fact, we have to recognise that in the coming years we will need to overcome significant operational hurdles while meeting the binding final disarmament deadline of 29 April 2012, as established in the Convention. Nearly two thirds, as I said before, of the declared stockpile are still to be destroyed, and there remain only four years until that date.
46. The Russian Federation and the United States of America, in particular, face the brunt of the burden, as they still have significant amounts of Category 1 chemical weapons to contend with. The large size of their remaining stockpiles makes it very difficult to state with any certainty if they will be able to complete destruction in the ever-shorter time available to them under the terms of the Convention. Yet both countries remain fully committed to the Convention and have scrupulously respected all intermediate destruction deadlines. The United States of America has completed the destruction of over 50% of its stockpiles, including its most dangerous chemicals weapons, whilst in the Russian Federation destruction has gained momentum and the plan concerning new destruction facilities is well on track. It would therefore be quite premature to jump to any conclusion in one direction or another.
47. A prudent approach warrants keeping the progress made by the two major possessor States under close review, bearing in mind that the Convention, especially under Article VIII, provides a number of options to deal with the matter closer to the final destruction deadlines. In addition, the Executive Council is already conducting visits to those two possessor States that have asked for the extension of the deadline until 29 April 2012. In addition to this positive concrete step, much closer to that date, if the situation so warrants, I have suggested that States Parties might wish to consider the option of calling for a Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to review the matter objectively and to decide on a course of action that best serves the long-term interests of both the Convention and the OPCW.
48. The two countries concerned, surely, on their part, need to ensure the timely commissioning of all necessary destruction sites and the timely allocation of the required resources.

Mr Chairman,

49. We must be fully aware, and at an early stage, of a future characterised by dwindling stockpiles and a permanent concern about the possible proliferation of chemical weapons. Whilst disarmament should always remain a vital objective of the OPCW, it is a matter of fact that in due course, all existing chemical weapons will have been destroyed. Yet, there is no end in sight for our equally imperative non-proliferation responsibilities.
50. Such reality will develop in a context of rapidly advancing science and technology, swift changes in the structure and characteristics of the chemical industry, as well as new global security challenges. If it is to remain effective, our Article VI verification work will need to undergo a natural adjustment and adapt to its evolving framework.
51. The Convention is not only about establishing norms. It is designed to provide assurance of compliance with those norms through verification, much of which

depends on the industry verification regime remaining relevant in the face of related new developments.

52. The Convention, in establishing the rationale for holding the five-yearly review conferences and in creating the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), establishes both our legal responsibility and a practical means for us to take due account of relevant scientific and technological developments, thereby laying the foundations of a system that will remain relevant in the long term. This is especially important from the perspective of verification, yet again.
53. In this respect, the Conference has before it the Secretariat's detailed submissions and the report of the Scientific Advisory Board. Together, they provide the necessary background material for the deliberations of the Review Conference.
54. The attention of the Conference has thus been drawn to issues such as the use of biological or biologically mediated processes for the production of chemicals that may be relevant for the purposes of the Convention, but are not yet covered by its verification regime.
55. Concern about novel agents is today magnified by emerging techniques that significantly reduce the time for the screening of large numbers of newly synthesised compounds, and by the shortened timelines from research and development to full-scale production.
56. We need to understand how the production of precursor or toxic chemicals that can be weaponised could be affected by these and other changes.
57. Likewise, in due course, States Parties may also wish to look into developments related to incapacitating agents and address questions such as the effect on the Convention of their possible introduction for the purposes of law enforcement and of new means for their use.
58. The ongoing and long-term work of the SAB and its temporary working groups thus assumes added significance, and I trust that the Review Conference will provide full support and appropriate guidance in this direction.
59. Equally significant are developments in the chemical industry, where important changes are taking place. The layout, design, and characteristics of plant sites are under continued review by industry. Very importantly, globalisation is bringing about a massive redistribution and regional migration of chemical production and trade in the world.
60. In parallel with these movements, there has been an exponential growth in the number of declared OCPFs. Today the figure is rising in the order of 4,500 to 5,000, depending on the year. Due to their technological features (such as multipurpose process equipment and flexible piping), a number of OCPFs could easily and quickly be re-configured for the production of chemical weapons and are thus highly relevant to the object and purpose of the Convention. This is all the more pertinent in view of the evolving threat posed by terrorism.

61. Against this background, in my view, the level of OCPF inspections still does not provide adequate non-proliferation assurances. This situation could be rectified through a number of steps which I hope will receive the considered attention of the Review Conference.
62. For example, I believe that, whilst respecting the annual ceiling established under the Convention, we should continue to gradually increase the number of OCPF inspections per year.
63. In addition, the interim modified selection methodology introduced recently for this category is meant to induce a more equitable distribution of inspections. States Parties have to ultimately reach agreement on subparagraph 11(c) of Part IX of the Verification Annex. The effectiveness of the regime would benefit as well from the provision of accurate, timely, and annually updated declarations, and from States Parties agreeing on providing more-specific information about their declared facilities. There is also the issue for States Parties to consider how the Secretariat could best use data from open sources to further refine the industry verification regime.
64. In a broader context, I would also hope that, in line with a specific request made by the First Review Conference, the Second Review Conference will reaffirm the need for the Secretariat to continue maintaining its readiness to conduct a challenge inspection in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, keeping the Council informed about such readiness. Equally, I trust the Conference will appeal to States Parties to ensure that the standing arrangements required by the Convention are effectively in place and will appreciate that the Technical Secretariat's training has greatly benefited from the support of some States Parties.
65. Similarly, I hope the Conference will reflect the need for the Secretariat to maintain its high standards of preparedness for the investigation of any alleged use of chemical weapons, as foreseen in the Convention. Besides training and exercises, it is important that the OPCW continue developing its capacity to analyse biomedical samples, about which the Secretariat has made some initial progress and a workable concept has been developed with the help of the SAB. The next step is for States Parties to engage fully in the process with a view to the establishment of the OPCW capability required by the Convention.

Mr Chairman,

66. The OPCW needs to remain actively and visibly committed to supporting the legitimate aspirations of all its States Parties with respect to Articles X and XI. Indeed, the faithful implementation of these two Articles will always be paramount for a large number of countries, and it is our responsibility and challenge to ensure that we continue to render adequate services to the OPCW membership at all times.
67. We therefore look forward to the guidelines and decisions that might emerge from the Second Review Conference and remain ready to implement those addressed to the Technical Secretariat, including, if necessary, through tailored national and regional programmes, such as the one specially developed, at the initiative of the Secretariat,



for Africa. We look forward also to the continued support of States Parties through voluntary contributions to this end.

Mr Chairman,

68. Maintaining confidence in compliance with the Convention's obligations and indeed its purposes also requires us to redouble our efforts to promote its effective national implementation and universality. These are two priority objectives where a lot of ground still remains to be covered and where the OPCW still faces significant challenges.
69. The full implementation of the Convention as envisioned in Article VII is not just an imperative for the sake of compliance but, increasingly, a useful additional tool for each country's own security, especially, since it provides a regulatory framework that would deter any use of toxic chemicals by anyone who intends to perpetrate crime or terror. I trust the Review Conference will reaffirm the need for all States Parties to complete the fulfilment of all their obligations in this respect.
70. In particular, States Parties that manufacture or trade in organic chemicals and have not yet enacted the comprehensive legislation need to do so promptly.
71. In such a context, it is of particular importance to bear in mind the necessity of upholding the "General Purpose Criterion" and of incorporating it into national legislation in a manner that clearly outlaws the use of any toxic chemical as a weapon as defined under the Convention. This issue is particularly relevant in the context of concerns about the impact of new discoveries on the operation of the Convention.

Mr Chairman,

72. As I stated on a number of occasions, universal adherence to the Convention is crucial to its success. Its object and purpose can be realised only if all States join it and fully implement its provisions. Each and every country that remains outside, never mind its reasons, undermines our ability to reach the Convention's goals.
73. Of the 12 UN Member States that have yet to join, some are taking steps to do so. The evolution in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean continues to be promising. Elsewhere, we look forward to the early accession of Iraq and Lebanon, which are at a well-advanced stage in completing all necessary steps.
74. Yet, there remains a small but critical group of countries whose continued non-adherence and apparent inattention are a matter of justified concern. Such is the situation in the Middle East, where the reticence to join the Convention is often explained away as an unavoidable consequence of regional tensions or conflicts and, in some cases, linked to other issues.
75. Like others, I have expressed my disagreement with this line of thought, which, in a way, seeks to legitimise an indefinite delay in joining a universal ban on weapons which are considered illegal and immoral by the overwhelming majority of countries and which, in the main, retain significance only as threats against innocent civilians.

76. We should follow with similar concern the persistent indifference coming from the Northern Korean Peninsula, and with special attention the by now long delay elsewhere in Southeast Asia.
77. A situation in which some can theoretically keep open the chemical weapons option is unfair and highly undesirable for the rest of the international community.
78. Whilst reaffirming the best disposition of the Secretariat to assist each of these few remaining countries in the process of joining the Convention, I am confident that the Review Conference will issue a strong appeal to all of them to do so at the earliest opportunity and that it will provide appropriate guidelines to States Parties, the policy-making organs and the Secretariat.

Mr Chairman,

79. As we look forward to the future, let me refer to a few important additional issues that, in my view, pose challenges to the OPCW, and that we need to address, therefore.
80. Firstly, there is the need for the Technical Secretariat to achieve ever-greater efficiency and to remain always faithful to the principles I mentioned earlier in my statement. I note in particular that the long-term financial stability and the capacity of the OPCW to continue with nil nominal budgetary growth whilst attaining full programme delivery, to which I remain firmly committed, will always require the complete and timely payment of all assessed contributions.
81. A second matter to highlight is the benefit for the OPCW from reaching out to all stakeholders and to civil society in general.
82. The chemical industry, whose presence here I wholeheartedly welcome, has played a very constructive role in the negotiation and implementation of the Convention. It is surely in the best interest of the OPCW that it remains a key partner. We look forward to continuing our constructive cooperation, and indeed States Parties will also want to follow up on the excellent dialogue held in the process of the tenth anniversary and of the preparations for this Review Conference. This is especially important in view of the changes taking place, as I mentioned before, in chemical manufacturing with regard to both the technological aspects and transitions to new, non-traditional locations.
83. Whilst the security of chemical plants is clearly not on the legal agenda of the Convention, exchanges such as the Industry and Protection Forum held last November with the support of the European Union have received wide appreciation.
84. A third point I wish to highlight is to gratefully acknowledge our constructive interaction with a number of NGOs that have consistently followed the evolution of the Convention and the OPCW, and have continuously supported us with their interest, their analysis, and thoughtful – and occasionally provocative – contributions.
85. Indeed, we need to maintain – and this is my fourth point – our dialogue not just with industry and NGOs, but also with the scientific community. The OPCW's

collaboration with the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) helps reinforce the message of the Convention at an ethical level. Their own endeavours, such as the industry's Responsible Care programme and IUPAC's ethics project, are valuable initiatives towards ensuring the peaceful applications of chemistry.

Mr Chairman,

86. Lastly, I would like to mention my hope that the OPCW will continue to make its contribution to international efforts against terrorism. Without in any way departing from its specific mandate and competences, due to its unique technical expertise and its model way of supporting States Parties in their implementation needs, the OPCW's contribution can be a significant one. I trust that the Review Conference will encourage the pursuance of the present exchanges within the group facilitated by the distinguished delegation of France, since they address a recognised major concern of our time and age.

Mr Chairman,

87. I wish to conclude by paying my sincere tribute to all States Parties, whose cooperation and goodwill have built a strong and vibrant multilateral Organisation. The spirit of collaboration and consensus shown by States Parties is one great asset of this Organisation and will no doubt enable them to effectively deal with the challenges in the near and long term.
88. The Second Review Conference provides an invaluable opportunity to unequivocally affirm the ability of multilateralism to effectively advance the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation and the value and necessity of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am confident that States Parties to the OPCW who have always acted in the best interests of their Organisation and of the Convention will reaffirm the objectives and purposes of the Convention and make a lasting contribution to the work of the OPCW.
89. A comprehensive and equally lasting prohibition on one of the most gruesome means of warfare is, after all, one of the finest contributions to the cherished goal of international peace and security.
90. Thank you very much for your attention.