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**STATEMENT BY DR. JOSÉ A. DÍAZ DUQUE, DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF CUBA, ON BEHALF OF THE STATES PARTIES OF THE
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AND
CHINA, AT THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
THE HAGUE, 7 APRIL 2008**

Mr Chairman,

On behalf of the Members of the Non-Aligned Movement who are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China (the NAM CWC States Parties and China), I would like to welcome you as Chairman of the Second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are honoured to see a Member State of the NAM in this important role, and express our confidence that given your vast experience and expertise, you will be able to steer the deliberations of this Second Review Conference to a successful conclusion.

I wish to thank the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr Rogelio Pfirter, for the presentation of his comprehensive report. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the preparation of the Second Review Conference, Ambassador Lyn Parker, for his dedicated efforts in preparation for this Second Review Conference.

The Republic of Cuba assumed the Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement at its 14th Summit Conference, which took place in Havana, in September 2006. At that special occasion, under the section “Disarmament and International Security” of Chapter I of the Final Document of the 14th Summit, the Heads of State or Government of the NAM adopted in its paragraph 103 clear language in relation to the CWC, and I quote:

“The Heads of State or Government of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) invited all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so as soon as possible with a view to its universality. They reiterated their call on the developed countries to promote international cooperation through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field and the removal of all and any discriminatory restrictions that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. They recalled that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the provisions of international cooperation contribute to the universality of the Convention. They also called upon States having declared possession of chemical weapons to bring about



the destruction of their chemical weapons at the earliest possible date. While recognizing the financial and technical challenges for some possessors, they called upon those States Parties in a position to do so, and where requested, to assist such possessor States in the achievement of the total elimination of chemical weapons.”

The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. The NAM CWC States Parties and China therefore call for the general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in line with the first preambular paragraph of the Convention.

Mr Chairman,

As a unique multilateral disarmament instrument that provides for comprehensive and verifiable prohibition of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, the Chemical Weapons Convention continues to play an important role in the enhancement of international peace and security.

The purpose of this Second Review Conference of the CWC is to review the operation of the Convention, taking into consideration any relevant scientific and technological developments. The NAM CWC States Parties and China firmly believe that the review process should uphold the Convention in its entirety and reiterate the commitment of all States Parties to the effective and balanced implementation of all its provisions. The review process should in no way lead to a change in the focus of the Convention.

We stress that the total destruction of chemical weapons is one of the fundamental pillars of the Convention. In this regard, the compliance with the deadlines as set forth in the Convention constitutes an integral part of the undertakings by the Chemical Weapons possessor States to destroy their chemical weapons stockpiles.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China note the significant advances by some possessor States Parties in the destruction of their Chemical Weapons stockpiles since the First Review Conference. Nevertheless, we express our serious concern about the pace of destruction of Chemical weapons in light of the fast approaching final deadlines, as extended by the Eleventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties. In this context, we firmly believe that it is imperative for the major possessor States Parties to strictly comply with the final deadline for the destruction of their chemical weapons, to uphold the credibility and integrity of the Convention.

With over 60% of the total amount of declared chemical weapons still to be destroyed, the destruction of Chemical Weapons should be the primary focus of the Second Review Conference. It is imperative that the Second Review Conference call upon the major possessor States to take every necessary measure to ensure the completion of destruction of their Chemical Weapons by the final extended deadline.

Mr Chairman,

Significant progress has been made since the adoption of the Action Plan for Universality in 2003, as 28 States have acceded to the Convention, resulting in a total of 183 States Parties.

We are of the view that universality of the Convention is fundamental to attain its object and purpose and to enhance international and regional peace and security.

We commend the collective efforts by States Parties, the Policy-Making Organs and the Technical Secretariat, that have made this improvement possible. It is important that the Second Review Conference urge remaining States not Party to join the Convention without further delay, particularly those whose non-adherence is a cause of serious concern, and request the Secretariat and those States Parties in a position to do so, to continue to intensify their efforts with a view to achieving full universality at the earliest possible date.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the promotion of international cooperation in the exchange of chemicals, equipment and scientific and technological information in the field of chemical activities, aimed at facilitating economic and social development, is fundamental for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.

During the past decade, developing countries who are States Parties to the Convention have implemented their obligations in good faith. We stress the obligation of States Parties to implement the Convention in a manner that avoids hampering the economic or technological development of States Parties and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. The NAM CWC States Parties and China strongly believe that undue restrictions amongst States Parties on exchange of technology, materials and equipment for peaceful purposes are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention, affect its long term viability and jeopardize the trust that exists amongst States Parties. In this context, we call for the removal of such undue restrictions for the full implementation of Article XI.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China recall the relevant decisions of the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Sessions of the Conference of the States Parties related to this subject and express their firm belief that the Second Review Conference shall reaffirm all States Parties' commitment to the full implementation of Article XI, endorse those important decisions and give the necessary guidance to ensure the full implementation of this fundamental pillar of the Convention. The experience gained by the Organisation in the implementation of other provisions of the Convention shall guide us in this regard.

We highlight the increase in the membership of the Organisation and the increase in demand of international cooperation and assistance programmes for capacity building that is not being met due to resource constraints. In this regard, the NAM CWC States Parties and China call for a steady increase, on an annual basis, of funding for the OPCW's international cooperation and assistance programmes through the regular budget meet the ever increasing demand. We also express our full support to the OPCW Programme for Africa and encourage the Technical Secretariat to expedite the pace of its implementation.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China wish to take this opportunity to call once more for an Action Plan for the full implementation of this fundamental pillar of the Convention.

Mr Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm the importance of Article X of the Convention, and of the activities of the OPCW to maintain and develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to Member States in situations of use or

threat of use of Chemical Weapons against them. We also reaffirm the recommendation by the Twelfth Session of the Conference of the States Parties aimed at developing measures for emergency assistance to Member States, including the victims of chemical weapons.

We are of the view that the Second Review Conference should reinforce the decision made at the Twelfth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and make the necessary recommendations for the full implementation of Article X. In this regard it is important that the Second Review Conference appeal to all States Parties and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund on a regular basis, to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to respond positively to the ever increasing demand of States Parties for assistance, particularly to the victims of Chemical Weapons.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts in the context of the CWC can be best achieved by the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the promotion of the universality of the Convention as well as the full implementation of Article X is of particular importance.

Mr Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China note with satisfaction that the verification system of the OPCW meets the requirements of the Convention. It has provided an effective and reliable tool to ensure that States Parties are complying with their obligations under the Convention.

We are of the view that the Second Review Conference should underline that with the amount of CW that is still to be destroyed, verification of destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles shall remain one of the major tasks of the Technical Secretariat.

On the subject of industry inspections, the NAM CWC States Parties and China underline that the Convention clearly sets out the hierarchy of risks posed by different chemicals to its object and purpose. The verification regime under Article VI must therefore correspond to the hierarchy of risks inherent to the respective category of chemicals. Any shift in the distribution of inspections which is contrary to this hierarchy would signal a departure from the fundamental principles of the verification regime based on the Convention. In this regard, we reiterate our call for continued consultations on the frequency of inspections and on the OCPF site selection methodology

The NAM CWC States Parties and China note with satisfaction that no case of non-compliance has been reported so far, and that no challenge inspections or investigations of alleged use have been requested.

We reiterate that a challenge inspection is an instrument to be used as a last resort and under exceptional circumstances. The consultation and clarification procedure is an integral part of Article IX, which shall precede any request for a challenge inspection. Any abuse of this provision would jeopardize the trust among States Parties and would be contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. Consequently, the Second Review Conference should draw on these principles in its report.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the view that resolving relevant outstanding issues is an essential part of the preparedness of the Organisation to conduct a challenge inspection. Therefore, the Second Review Conference should request the Policy-Making Organs to expedite their efforts with a view to resolve those outstanding issues at the earliest possible date.

Significant progress has also been achieved as a result of a constructive and cooperative approach in the implementation of the Plan of Action on Article VII approved by the Eighth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. A decision adopted by the Tenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, bears testimony to its success (C-10/DEC.16, dated 11 November 2005).

In this framework, the NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue this approach and devise appropriate solutions to overcome the practical difficulties and resource constraints encountered by individual States Parties in carrying out their national implementation measures.

We are convinced that through the provision of meaningful assistance and technical support to States Parties, at their request, the objectives of the implementation of Article VII can be more effectively realized.

Mr Chairman,

Since the entry into force ten years ago of the CWC, the OPCW has developed into a well established multilateral organisation for achieving the object and purpose of the Convention. The practice of consensus decision-making by the Policy-Making Organs shall continue to be crucial in achieving our common goals, as well as in preserving the integrity of the Convention. Thus, the NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the view that the Second Review Conference should reaffirm that the Policy-Making Organs continue to make their decisions based on this very important principle.

We also express our concern about the persisting unresolved issues related to the full implementation of the Headquarters Agreement, and call on the Host Country to resolve these issues without delay.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China further recall that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat should be fair and transparent, paying due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide as possible geographical basis, particularly at the professional level.

Mr Chairman,

Although States Parties have not yet reached consensus on the Draft Report of the Second Review Conference, the NAM CWC States and China remain committed to engage constructively in the coming deliberations.

I would like to conclude by emphasising that the NAM CWC States Parties and China are fully committed to their obligations under the Convention. We look forward to the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in the near future.

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The NAM CWC States Parties and China would like to give you the assurance of their fullest cooperation in ensuring the success of this Second Review Conference. I would also request to have this Statement issued as an official document of this Second Review Conference.

Thank you.

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