

**SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE
OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF
DEVELOPING, PRODUCING, STOCKPILING AND USING
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND ON THEIR PROHIBITION
(The Hague, 7 - 18 April 2008)**

**STATEMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR.BENCHAA DANI,
AMBASSADOR OF ALGERIA IN THE NETHERLANDS,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE OPCW
AND HEAD OF THE ALGERIAN DELEGATION**

8 April 2008

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Mr Chairman, allow me first of all to express you my warmest congratulations and those of the Algerian delegation for your outstanding election and to tell you the pleasure that I have to see you chair this Second Revision Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The trust that has been unanimously placed in you, shows rightly the recognition of your professional as well as personal qualities. I am convinced that the choice that has been made for your person, constitutes before all a tribute paid by the International community to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the role that it strives to play in favour of disarmament, peace and international security.

My congratulations are addressed also to all the members of the Bureau, the vice-chairmen and the elected States at all the levels of the Conference.

I would like to greet too, the presence of the Director-General of our Organisation, Mr. Rogelio Pflirter and mention through his person, the Technical Secretariat for the work it has accomplished tirelessly since the First Revision Conference.

The occasion has also been given to me to congratulate the Ambassador Lyn Parker, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for the efforts he expended generously in his task of Chairman of the Working Group of unlimited composition in charge of the preparations of our conference. In the same way we would like to mention the efforts maintained by the vice chairmen and the whole of the States Parties during the fruitful consultations preceding our meeting.

This is, at last, the place to welcome the delegations of the Member States, as well as those of the new members, the observers and the guests, who wish all to make their contribution to this five-year exercise of revision of our convention.

My delegation would like to join with the statements delivered on behalf of the African and Non Aligned Groups and those of China.

Mr Chairman,

While soon eleven years will have passed by since its entry into force, the Convention for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons will be the theme of the sessions of this honourable assembly during two weeks. If we have gathered, in these days of April, to assess for the second time an implementation term of 5 years of the Convention, it is without doubt in order to attempt to draw up accurately the most exhaustive balance sheet as possible, appropriate as well as critical, of the results and insufficiencies of our perception and, why not, of our conception of the work of chemical disarmament. Beyond an assessment of the realised progress, the point is to seize this historical occasion that gives us the possibility to make adjustments, rectifications and to provide for palliative measures liable to give the necessary boost to mobilize yet more the International community in a sacred mission of banishment of a whole rank of weapons of mass destruction.

If the success of this organisation amounts, with 183 members, to its universality, at present, or at the destruction of some 37 % of the declared stockpiles of chemical weapons, the fact remains that our concern is also fed by the existence of production and stockpiling installations for chemical weapons in 12 countries as well as by the fact that 12 other States are still staying outside our Convention. A fortiori, the possession of chemical weapons by non member States should arouse our deepest concern.

Mr Chairman,

While recognizing the authentic work of disarmament accomplished by the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and its salutary effects for the whole mankind, Algeria who has actively contributed to its elaboration, adoption and promotion as well as to its universalisation would like to reaffirm solemnly on this occasion, its firm commitment to the principles issuing from this and to do its utmost for the realisation of its aims – and of all its aims – following the example of the other Member States concerned with the reinforcement of peace and international security.

The commitment of my country to the Convention stems from its full adherence to the principles that it is has continuously defended in order to promote an efficient system for collective security with the aim to free mankind definitively from the spectre of the threat represented by mass destruction weapons, be they chemical, biological or nuclear and this in the framework of a general and comprehensive disarmament. This commitment is all the more backed up and confirmed as there exists a legitimate fear of imminent danger represented by possession and use of massive destruction weapons by terrorist groups.

In spite of the satisfaction given by the contribution to peace, the implementation of the Convention does not seem to be approved unanimously and the rule of consensus restricts seriously the scope of the ambitions of the International community. Democratisation, transparency and respect of the spirit of consensus should guide us constantly.

Algeria has always appealed for a comprehensive, balanced and non discriminatory application of the Convention. My country pleads at present in favour of its adaptation to new threats, and of its contribution, thanks to a new reading that is up to our responsibilities, in order to face up the challenges of our time. The chemical weapon has exposed barbarity and contemporary history learned us that its first victims were Algerians. The perceptiveness of us all and our capacity of anticipation could induce us, surely, to help to protect

mankind and future generations from potential and certain disasters, if the Convention will not be put up to our hope, our fears and our frights and if possession, use and learning to produce chemical weapons, toxic products and explosives are not removed immediately from dangerous State forces and non State forces.

Mr Chairman,

No need to remind of the clever balance set up by the editors of the Convention between all these dispositions, between all these purposes, between the interest of the owner States and the non owner States, between disarmament and non proliferation, between destruction and cooperation for a peaceful use of chemistry, between implementation and assistance. Each time that this balance is threatened or broken, it seems to us that a large part of the International community becomes demobilized and loses interest. If it is true that our action lies within the scope of a course that will lead to peace and security, it is also true that the Convention should place itself in the service of the great majority of the Member States and of all the concerns of the International community.

Witnesses of the firm commitment of the Member States to have to destruct before the 29 April 2012, their stockpiles of weapons of the 1st rank and of the encouraging results of some States, following the example of Albania and, soon, India, we should conclude from this that the future of our organisation should be drawn in a course of non proliferation and promotion of the use of chemical products for peaceful purposes.

Mr Chairman,

In spite of the praiseworthy efforts put forward, the obligation of destruction should be perfected in the framework of a spirit of national, international and collegiate mobilization and in solidarity. The participation of Algeria in visits of destruction plants and challenge inspections expresses its relevant and constant commitment to the urgent task of universal, global and general disarmament. Of course, it is understood that the International community will only be calmed

down definitively when the last stockpile of chemical weapons will be destructed and the last plant converted . Our conference should propose a reinforcement of an appropriate and recognized mechanism in order to realise a realist as well as efficient chemical disarmament.

Aware of the need to convert the areas of Africa and the Middle East in spaces free from massive destruction weapons, Algeria brings the contribution that is hers with a view of full universality of the Convention. Algeria continues to be convinced that if for some countries the decision to adhere will be favoured by the return to an appropriate climate and the setting up of reciprocal measures of confidence, for other non member States, the way of dialogue, the virtues of assistance as well as the attraction of the Convention by its balanced application will contribute more to convince them to join us. The point is, indeed, to spread out the Convention to realist, incentive and substantial purposes that will reinforce in the same time the Non member States in their decision to adhere as well as the Member States in their phase of implementation of the Convention.

Indeed, if it is regrettable that some Member States have not yet accomplished their duties of setting up the Authority in charge of the commitment of the Convention neither the appropriated legislation, Algeria deplores any suggestion or reference to the use of conditionalities, because only concertation, positive approach and assistance would be likely to accelerate this process. The workshop in Algiers in June 2007, which has for the first time succeeded in conciliation the purposes of universality and commitment, has set out in this respect the right way with appreciable dividend on both chapters. The permanent state of mind of my country to give assistance to African States desirous of help in this field is allegedly meeting the expectations of the action plan and expressing an approach whose opportunity and efficiency it is convinced of. Similarly, the contribution of the Convention in the field of the global fight against terrorism, is allegedly encouraging also the States in their decisions, either of adhesion for some States, or of implementation for other States.

Mr Chairman,

Nowadays, the international community seems much more worried about transnational terrorism than about the spectre of a classical war, because of the threat that it lies on it over the last years. Even if the international community has not succeeded in reaching a consensus on its definition, it experiences its appearances in daily life as bloody, dramatic and striking blindly civil populations of the five continents, in particular in Asia and in Africa. In a climate of general mobilisation of all the actors of international law, our Organisation hesitates and has reversed at a moment that it should put this question on the agenda of our conference because of security reasons and obvious emergencies, or, well then, waiting a chemical disaster provoked by terrorists.

Algeria has from the beginning of time relied on its sole national capacities to fight terrorism and is recognized at present for its will to mobilize the international community and for its expertise that it puts at the disposal of the international community by duty of international solidarity. Algeria continues to be convinced in this by the relevance of the Convention of which a great many measures can be applied in the framework of the global fight against terrorism non only in the field of prevention but also in its reaction capacity against a chemical attack. Our Organisation wouldn't it have felt concerned or responsible in case of a terrorist chemical attack because it had not been able to show foresight and predictability facing the negligence or the lack of vigilance from States holders of stockpiles of chemical weapons or lacking to control commercialisation and transfer or chemical products?

My delegation continues to be convinced that, because of its unanimity towards the question of contribution to the fight against terrorism, this assembly will be capable during its work sessions of showing a burst of energy likely to raise our consciousness to the level of our apprehensions and of directing the application of the Convention in an imminent purpose of security, stability and peace, in the framework notably of its Articles 4,7,10 and 11.

The Organisation should exploit more the Group of unlimited composition in charge of terrorism and cooperation with International and regional organisations as well as the regional prevention centres against terrorism in order to set up a strategy of collaboration and international solidarity commensurate with its responsibilities.

The contribution to the mobilisation against the effects of terrorism should be taken into account also under the chapter of chemical protection and assistance in case of a chemical attack and that deserves all our attention and support.

It is important to remind in this regard that preventive measures have to be accompanied by appropriate means in order to face attack possibilities or chemical accidents of which a State Party might be the target. This Conference might recommend a reinforcement of the instruments and the measures that should allow developing countries in particular to have at their disposal tools, equipments and protection trainings.

Mr Chairman,

There is no need to emphasize the importance of international cooperation. In spite of some progress in the reinforcement and broadening of cooperation activities since the 1st Revision Conference, the opportunity has been given to us to explore further ways and means in order to reinforce this section of which the actual contribution to the economic development and the scientific progress of developing countries participates in the reinforcement of international security.

Similarly my delegation appeals the Conference to give answers to our pertinent and legitimate worries on the question of freedom of international exchanges of chemical products between State Parties, as it has been provided for in Article XI of the Convention, so intolerable, unfair and unjustified seem the hindrances of the industrialized countries.

Indeed a great number of States Parties continue to be subjected to obstacles to the principle of free access to the international market for chemical products and equipments for purposes which are not forbidden by the Convention, which raises legitimate questioning as for the necessity of a non discriminatory implementation of our Convention.

That is why Algeria considers that this Conference should reaffirm the necessity of the respect of the commitments relating to the freedom of international trade of chemical products for purposes which are not forbidden by the Convention and should thus think of setting up a device able to meet the interests of the whole of the State Parties. An action plan following the model that has been realised for other sections of the Convention should constitute, in our opinion, the appropriate mechanism for a full et efficient implementation of a major question and measures of highest priority.

In fact, hoping that this conference be able to meet the expectations of the States Parties in a spirit of collegiality, responsibility, and a sense of balance and justice, I would like to thank the audience for the confidence it has placed in my country to chair the plenary committee and for its appeal to all delegations and members of the Technical Secretariat to give me their help, advice and assistance. Be sure, Mr Chairman, that my delegation is already mobilized and stays at your disposal to give you all its support as well as its humble contribution for the success of our work sessions./.

I thank you very much.