

**SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR JORGE LOMONACO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO, AT THE SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION OF THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS.**

**Mr. Chairman.**

1. It has been a most wise decision that you have been chosen to guide the works of this Second Review Conference of the Convention. You possess, an acute perception of the contending interests and visions and, also, a visible equidistance vis-à-vis each one of the Parties. Your commitment is with our organization, with the Convention. You can count, Mr. President, upon the full support of my delegation.
2. Mexico also wishes to acknowledge the endeavours of Ambassador Parker in the preparatory works of this Conference.
3. Not from now, but since already many years, we have been skilfully guided by a Director-General committed with how best to contribute and help us to advance towards what we often refer as "the object and purpose" of the Convention. Ambassador Pfirter, Mexico acknowledges, again, your leadership at the head of this Organisation.

**Mr. Chairman.**

4. As other delegations that have preceded mine, Mexico is convinced that this Second Review Conference shall give us the opportunity to render our organisation stronger, forward-looking.
5. However, Mexico firmly believes that we will only effectively do so if we succeed in maintaining it unshakably rooted in what has been at its very origin, and if we take into full account the nature of the myriad of developments that make up today's reality and distinguish the substantive issues, without deviating from what, we the States

Parties, consider to be the Convention's underlying objective: advancing towards the achievement of ".general and complete disarmament...".

6. More than ten years have passed since the CWC entered into force and, for the second time, we are to engage in a complex inventory and prospective exercise, whose main goal shall be to objectively appraise where we are, how and what have we accomplished, and the challenges that lay ahead.

**Mr. Chairman.**

7. Our endeavours must therefore lead us to determine what is the state of the Convention today, what are the contending forces at play and, also, to elucidate how and into what our organisation may evolve, if it should or should not. It will also be necessary to identify where the focus is being placed and, in contrast, what are the nuances that minimize tasks considered central, so as not to incur into false dilemmas: non proliferation or destruction. It is not one or the other. In short, to maintain destruction in its only and right place: at the core of the prohibition of chemical weapons, and as the fundamental premise for non proliferation. That which does not exist cannot proliferate.
8. We shall also have to address why other pillars of the Convention considered fundamental by many, verbally recognised as such by others, face such great reticence and even not so veiled opposition. To put it simply: I am referring to the full implementation of Article XI. We will insist upon the necessity not to invert the terms of what Mexico views as a clear-cut balanced equation.
9. For, if we are ready to accept that everything is important, under no circumstance may we agree that everything is equally substantive. In a succinct manner, these are the topics at the core of our debates and, understandably, shall also be at the heart of the negotiations. And all this shall take place in an ever-changing world with science and technological advances blurring frontiers in the various fields of knowledge, presenting at once, new risks and new opportunities.

10. The key question, for it encompasses all, shall remain: how faithfully have we abided by our obligations? Their implementation, we all agree, impinges directly in OPCW's contribution in the field of disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security.
11. If we were lucid and decisive enough to create the OPCW, it was because chemical weapons stockpiles do exist and because we were and are convinced that their existence hinders the attainment of general and complete disarmament. Mexico therefore firmly believes that destruction is the condition *sine qua non*.

**Mr. Chairman.**

12. We cannot obviate the fact that a sizeable number of States Parties lag behind in complying with the obligations contained in Article VII. Nor can we forget the fact that many State Parties often face a myriad of constraints and competing needs, is not necessarily a lack of commitment. These constraints, some of which have much to do with vital national priorities, may differ in nature, they are nonetheless urgent.
13. Although the immense majority of States Parties does not possess chemical weapons, we are nonetheless committed and decided to contribute to their total elimination, first and foremost, through national implementation measures as stipulated under Article VII of the Convention, specifically through the setting up of the national authorities, and through the drafting and passage of legislation that complies fully with the above mentioned article.

**Mr. Chairman.**

14. On occasions, the process that Mexico has followed in its efforts to comply with Article VII obligations, specifically concerning legislation, has been labelled as "tortuous". We are convinced that such a characterization failed to take into account what I have referred to as a myriad of challenges and competing needs. Nor did it take into account the complex agenda of the Legislative Power. There is more to it: Mexico was committed to drafting a piece of legislation with –allow me the expression- "teeth", or 'comprehensive'. My country has the second most important

chemical industry in the Latin American and Caribbean region and we believed that, in the national interest, it was necessary to go beyond complying with the obligations under Article VII.

15. Mexico has now done so: on March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Power submitted to the Senate –Home Affairs and Legislative Commissions- the Decree whereby the Federal Law for the Control of Chemical Substances Susceptible of Diversion for the Fabrication of Chemical Weapons. Once it will be reviewed by those commissions it will go to the full Senate for approval, for this piece of legislation has been ‘marked’ important for our national security.
16. Compliance with obligations under Article VII shall in no way imply a change on the principles and positions espoused by Mexico: destruction is fundamental towards the achievement of the end and purpose of the Convention. Nor will it change its firm conviction that we should not ascribe equal substantive importance to the various obligations under the Convention.
17. We will continue to proactively participate in the works of our organisation. Mexico has a long tradition of serious involvement in disarmament and non proliferation issues. Indeed, in all fields of international law. My government, it is well-known, has always put its full trust in it, and it is rigorously consistent with it.

**Mr. Chairman.**

18. As of April 2008, a preliminary view shows sufficient reasons to be cautiously optimistic: we have made progress, albeit painstakingly in specific areas. We are a much larger, if at times slightly acrimonious, family. Yet, committed to attain the purpose and end of the CWC. That our organisation does not deviate from what is its *raison d'être* shall largely depend on how attentive and active we, all States Parties, are and engage in its endeavours
19. We know, we are certain, that the tasks we are about to tackle will be intensive, and will demand the best of our negotiating abilities. Hopefully, we shall succeed in reconciling, and in attaining that fine balance between national interests, and the

larger interests of an organisation that, we claim, still is a success story. This aimed balance will be achieved only through the punctual, verifiable and unequivocal concretion of the pillars of the Convention.

**Mr. Chairman.**

20. Finally, I wish to refer to what I consider to be one of the most endearing and distinctive traits of the modus operandi of our organisation: consensus. So elusive, so hard to achieve, often frustrating as a means rather than as an end, frustrating specially when things are not according to our interests and to our perceptions, when we view the argumentation of others purely as irritating negotiation techniques, when we forget that others see ours exactly in the same manner!

21. Mexico firmly believes that for consensus to gain in efficacy, it is necessary that we display greater willingness and disposition to arrive at lucid, visionary and inclusive accords. The success or failure of this Conference depends largely on the will to articulate and arrive at agreements. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that Mexico participates with such conviction.

**Thank you Mr. Chairman.**