



**THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATE PARTIES
TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

**STATEMENT
BY
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TO THE OPCW**

THE HAGUE, APRIL 7-18, 2008

*Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the OPCW
Distinguished delegates,*

First, allow me on behalf of the delegation of Vietnam, to warmly congratulate H. E. Ambassador Waleed El Kherei, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia, for his election as the Chairman of the Second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am confident that his diplomatic skills and dedication, with valuable efforts by all delegations will steer the Second Review Conference to fruition.

I wish to express our high appreciation to the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter for his able leadership and comprehensive statement at this conference. I would also like to thank H.E. Ambassador Lyn Parker, Permanent Representative of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as the Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group and his dedicated staff for all the excellent work in preparation for this Conference.

May I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Oscar de los Reyes Ramos, Permanent Representative of Cuba, Chairperson of the NAM CWC and China Group for his efforts to prepare for the Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,
The existing weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The CWC has become a cornerstone of international cooperation and an important multilateral disarmament instrument to eliminate a most dangerous type of WMD. The 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Conventions last year and this 2nd Review Conference offer us excellent opportunities to review the operation and implementation of the CWC and lay out possible solutions to challenges as we try to attain the objectives of the Convention.

As victimized by the toxic chemicals used during the prolong wars, Vietnam is fully aware of the consequences caused by the chemical war-fare and strongly supportive of the objectives, universality and implementation of the CWC. Priority should be given to ensure that all declared chemical weapons are destroyed, completely and irreversibly, by 29 April 2012 as set forth in the Convention. We wish to reiterate Vietnam's commitment to work closely with OPCW and other state parties to meet this deadline and to achieve this central purpose of the Convention.

Universality of the Convention is one of central benchmarks to measure the success and effectiveness of the CWC. We all can be gratified by the number of State Parties to the OPCW that has increased to 183 by now from 151 since the First Review Conference in 2003. While looking forward to

welcoming new members soon to OPCW, we wish to invite the State Parties that have not joined or ratified CWC to do so as soon as possible as the CWC becomes the world's most universally accepted disarmament regime.

As a fundamental pillar of CWC, the implementation of the Convention has been effectively promoted since all the possessor states have made impressive progress. Nearly 40% of the declared chemical weapons have been destroyed under OPCW verification. But as over 60% of them remain to be destroyed, full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of CWC continues to be the priority not just for the 2nd Review Conference discussions but also for the coming years. The pace of the CWC implementation should be expedited as strides are being made to meet the legal deadline in 4 years.

OPCW is also unique for its verification as a key confidence building measure to ensure appropriate destruction of chemical weapons as required by the Convention. Given the safety, financial and technological challenges of inspection being faced, more efforts of all the State Parties and strict international verification are called for in this regard.

Non-proliferation of chemical weapons serves to be the focus of our intensified activities, especially when we move to the next phase of the implementation of the Convention and try to prevent chemical weapons from falling into the hands of warring parties or terrorists.

With fast scientific and technological advances in a globalized world, the implementation of the Convention should also promote peaceful uses of chemistry. International cooperation in the fields of economy and technology in general, and chemical activities in particular, need to be reinforced in accordance with its Article XI.

Universality and implementation of the Convention require more international cooperation and assistance projects. Capacity building continues to be fundamental to the attainment of the CWC objectives. Efforts should be made of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to work out appropriate solutions to assist individual States Parties to overcome practical difficulties and resource constraints in carrying out their national implementation and to support the victims of the use of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

For more than 10 years of its OPCW membership, Vietnam has made continuous efforts to fulfill its obligation as well as its commitments under the Convention.

The Vietnamese National Authority (or VNA) has adopted a comprehensive set of administrative measures and created proper legal framework to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention. Vietnam has also strictly

fulfilled its obligations as a State Party to the Convention with respect to the areas of declaration, notification and finance.

The encouraging results of those industrial inspections carried out by the OPCW in Vietnam since 2003 have demonstrated the authenticity of the country's declaration to the OPCW and its attitude of goodwill, cooperation and commitment to the Convention.

Vietnam highly values the assistance and support extended by the OPCW, the European Union and relevant parties in developing its capacity of the CWC implementation. The conferences and executive programmes of 10-17 March 2004, 6-15 September 2005, 12-13 December 2005, and other projects co-sponsored by the VNA and OPCW have proved to be effective to the national implementation of the Convention. The sub - regional workshop for Customs Authorities in Southeast Asia on Technical Aspect of the Transfers Regime co-sponsored on 23-27 April 2007 in Hanoi by VNA and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW has also promoted the Southeast Asian and ASEAN cooperation in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

With more than a decade of its existence, the Chemical Weapons Convention has proved as the universal and effective multilateral disarmament instrument as it encompasses over 98% of the global population and represents over 98% of the worldwide chemical industry. Today, the Convention continues to play an important role in the enhancement of international peace and security under a comprehensive and operative agenda.

As we work to achieve elimination of a class of weapons of mass destruction through collective action within the multilateral framework, tribute should be paid to the dedication and effectiveness of the OPCW. Vietnam highly appreciates the efforts and substantial contribution of the Technical Secretariat and Mr. Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pfrirter personally, to ensure sustainable progress of the Convention operation.

As a State Party to the Convention and a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2008-2009 term, we would like to take the opportunity of attendance at the 2nd Review Conference to reiterate our strong commitment to work closely with OPCW and other State Parties for full, effective, non-discriminatory and balanced implementation of the CWC to achieve a world free of chemical weapons as well as other classes of weapons of mass destruction for the sake of peace and development under the UN Charter.

*May I wish the Second Review Conference a great success.
Thank you.*