



ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

**“15th CHEMICAL WEAPONS DEMILITARISATION
CONFERENCE”**

ADDRESS BY

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Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to attend this important Conference on the subject of chemical weapons demilitarisation.

It is propitious that this year's edition, the concluding one, should be held in the United Kingdom, which is a steadfast supporter of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and has contributed immensely to its work.

This year, we mark the fifteen years of the entry-into-force of the Convention. Landmarks prompt reflection. In our case, we can take due satisfaction from our success and achievements, as well as consider the challenges that lie ahead.

Given the topic of this Conference, I will review OPCW's progress in chemical demilitarisation. I will then share with you my thoughts regarding the future of the Organisation.

Since last year's gathering in Interlaeken, Switzerland, progress towards chemical demilitarisation has remained steady and the Organisation has continued to advance its goals in other areas of its mandate.

Chemical weapons disarmament is a core objective of the Convention. Seven States Parties - a State Party, Albania, India, Iraq, Libya, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America - declared the possession of 69,430 metric tonnes (MT's) of Category 1 chemical weapons. All of them have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate

their commitment to completing the destruction of their stockpiles, despite inherent difficulties in implementing their initial destruction plans.

As of 29 April 2012, which was the final extended deadline for the destruction of chemical weapons, about 51,128 MTs, or 73.64%, of Category 1 chemical weapons had been destroyed under verification by the Secretariat. Three of the possessor states - a State Party, Albania, and India having fully completed the destruction of all their chemical weapons.

The policy-making organs of the OPCW showed great wisdom in dealing with the lapsed deadline. Acting in a most constructive spirit, the decision adopted by our Member States at the 16th Session of the OPCW Conference of States Parties held in December last year enables the remaining possessor States to fulfil their obligations in due course while providing more transparency and increased reporting requirements. The decision is symbolic of the spirit of cooperation which characterises the work of the OPCW. It also fully preserves the integrity of the Convention as serves to uphold its credibility as an instrument that serves our collective security interests. As requested by the Conference decision, three of the possessor states submitted their detailed plans for the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons in which they include a planned completion date.

The United States of America had destroyed 24,923.671 MT's, or 89.75% of the total declared amount of Category 1 chemical weapons and plans to complete the destruction of the remaining CW by September 2023. Eleven CWDF's in the United States of America have completed

operations, while two others – at Pueblo and Blue Grass - are under construction and expected to start destruction in 2015 and 2020, respectively. The United States of America has also destroyed all of its Category 2 and Category 3 chemical weapons.

On its part, the Russian Federation has continued its destruction operations at 4 sites – Leonidovka, Maradykovsky, Pochep, and Shchuchye and has completed the destruction of 24,961 MTs, or 62.46% of the total declared amount of Category 1 chemical weapons and plans to destroy the remaining amount by December 2015. The Russian Federation has also destroyed all of its Category 2 and Category 3 chemical weapons. The Russian Federation continues to implement its concept of gradually bringing CW destruction facilities into operation, by commissioning individual units, designed for the destruction of a particular type of chemical agent or munitions. New destruction capacities are being built at currently operational facilities while the new facility being built at Kizner is expected to become operational in the second quarter of 2013.

With respect to Libya, destruction operations were halted on 8 February 2011 due to the breakdown of the heating unit in the disposal station, which needed to be replaced. By that date, Libya had destroyed 13,476 MT's of the declared stockpiles of Category 1 chemical weapons as well as 555.71 MT's, or 39.64%, of its Category 2 chemical weapons and all of its Category 3 chemical weapons. Recently, Libya submitted to the Secretariat declarations on chemical weapons not previously declared, which have been subsequently verified by the Secretariat. Libya indicated that it intends to restart operations for the disposal of the remaining chemical weapons by March 2013 and complete destruction, including

that of the remaining precursors, by December 2016. A number of States Parties have considered the possibility of providing assistance to Libya to enable it complete the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons. In this regard, under the Global Partnership Program, Canada has provided a large sum representing its financial support to assist Libya to fulfil its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As for Iraq, this State Party has recently submitted additional information in support of its initial declaration which details not only the condition of the chemical weapons declared but also the explosive, chemical, and physical hazards associated with the two bunkers in which these items are stored. Iraq continues to work with the Secretariat and other States parties to complete the assessment of the declared chemical weapons and decide on an appropriate disposal method.

The possessor States have showed unremitting commitment to uphold their obligations under the Convention and the firm resolve to overcome the many difficulties of the destruction process. While we welcome the continuous commitment of the respective possessors to the complete destruction of the remaining stockpiles and the progress they have achieved so far towards fulfilling their obligations under the Convention, we encourage them to do their utmost to accelerate the current schedule and complete destruction in the shortest time possible.

Our demilitarisation programme also includes ensuring that the capability to produce chemical weapons is permanently and verifiably eliminated. Out of the 70 CWPF's declared by 13 States Parties, 43 have already been destroyed and 21 have been converted for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. Eleven States Parties have completed the

destruction or conversion of all their declared CWPF's. All converted production facilities remain under systematic verification by the OPCW for a 10-year period following conversion to ensure that they are fully consistent with the approved conversion requests. The nature of continued verification measures at converted facilities for which 10 years have elapsed after the Director-General's certification of their conversion is established in accordance with a recent decision of the Council (EC-67/DEC.7, dated 16 February 2012).

The declaration, verification and destruction of old and abandoned chemical weapons are of no less importance to the Convention and the OPCW. Eighteen States Parties have declared possession of old and/or abandoned chemical weapons. All these States face similar and delicate problems. The discovery of remnants of past wars and testing is an ongoing and unpredictable process. New discoveries continue, which have to be declared according to the Convention to allow for the verification of the destruction process by the OPCW. These discoveries represent a danger to the populations of the affected member States and to the personnel tasked with their recovery and destruction. Notwithstanding such challenges, the concerned States Parties are making every effort to carry out destruction of these weapons in a safe and effective manner, and the Technical Secretariat stands ready to support them fully.

In this context, China and Japan have continued their cooperation in dealing with the historic legacy of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China. 47,189 abandoned chemical weapons have been declared at over 70 locations in 17 provinces in China. Of this total, 35,636 ACW's have already been destroyed by Japan, with the assistance of China, at the Abandoned Chemical Weapons – Mobile Destruction

Facility, which is located at Nanjing (Jiangsu Province). Japan, with assistance from China, has conducted on-site investigations and recovery and identification operations at various locations on the territory of China.

The achievements noted so far underscore the value of the Convention as an effective instrument for promoting the objectives of international peace and security, and as an instrument whose worthy goals are indeed achievable.

The OPCW has demonstrated its effectiveness to the international community by operating a successful verification regime, which includes national declarations, routine on-site inspections at both military installations and chemical industrial plants, challenge inspections and investigations of alleged use, consultation and clarification instruments, monitoring of declarable activities and facilities in the chemical industry. The Convention has also created a unique culture of cooperation in the context of a truly multilateral endeavour in the field of security. States Parties have regularly cooperated in promoting chemical demilitarisation through sharing of resources, best practices and following other avenues of cooperation and collaboration.

The Secretariat has undertaken, and will continue to conduct on a regular basis, the assessment of its verification activities with the aim of improving and optimising them. The co-operation and support of the States Parties remains crucial in improving the efficiency of the verification activities, while maintaining the required degree of confidence, credibility and transparency. This will allow the Secretariat

to continue to meet its verification responsibilities with the available resources. This brings me to issues of a futuristic nature.

As we get closer to completing the disarmament tasks, the non-proliferation aspect of the Convention will continue to demand priority attention. It will in fact become central to the long term mission of the OPCW. Particular attention will have to be devoted to the verification of the global chemical industry and monitoring of the trade in chemicals worldwide.

Given the large number of industrial facilities that have been declared to the OPCW, the foremost challenge in this regard will be to ensure refinement and adequacy of the industry verification regime. It will also be necessary to maintain and enhance the knowledge and expertise of the organisation in the field of verification as there are continuous advancements in science and technology.

The importance of keeping abreast with the developments in science and technology in order to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention, including with a view to keeping up-to-date verification technologies will be among the main themes of the CWC's Third Review Conference to be held in April next year. The OPCW Scientific Advisory Board will continue to play a valuable role in preparation for the Third Review Conference and in enabling me to render specialised advice to the policy-making organs and the States Parties in areas of science and technology relevant to the Convention. I am confident that the SAB will play its part in creating the necessary bridges between science and policy.

In addition to fulfilling its mandate for disarmament and non-proliferation, the OPCW also has an important mandate to promote international cooperation. This covers a number of areas including assistance and protection against chemical weapons. In this field, the Secretariat continues to conduct a number of activities for the development and improvement of protection against chemical weapons for personnel who are involved in emergency response.

Contemporary security threats, including the possibility of the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors, have created a renewed interest in the ability of the OPCW to coordinate the delivery of emergency assistance to States Parties in case of an attack or the threat of an attack with chemical weapons. Our States Parties are also keen on building their national capacities to deal with the threats or actual incidents involving the use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals.

We encourage the establishment of regional assistance and protection centred to which the OPCW could provide its support for training activities.

These are legitimate expectations because the OPCW is seen widely as a guarantor of security against chemical weapons. Today this includes the role and potential of the Organisation in the field of anti-terrorism.

The OPCW also helps to build national and regional capacities that have a beneficial economic impact for recipient countries. For instance, the OPCW trains chemists and engineers in industrial best practice to safely manage chemicals in a complex industrial environment. We have programmes designed to enhance analytical skills in chemistry. Other

programmes provide funding for research projects and organise internships for qualified people at world-class research institutions.

Our outreach activities and a sustained programme of assistance have contributed to the endeavours of many States Parties in closing the gap between joining the Convention and implementing it more effectively. And this experience can contribute towards similar on-going exercises, for example, in context of the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1540.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in September 2006 also encourages the OPCW to continue to help States to build their capacity to prevent terrorists from accessing toxic chemicals, to ensure security at chemical and related facilities, and to respond effectively in the event of an attack in which such materials are used.

A key challenge before us is effective national implementation of the Convention. We cannot fully reap the benefits of disarmament and non-proliferation without effective domestic implementation of the Convention by all our States Parties. It is crucial for all States Parties to have in place the administrative structures and the domestic legislation necessary to give legal effect to their obligations under the CWC.

States Parties need to ensure that national implementation leaves no loopholes in domestic legal systems. Inadequate attention to this aspect can compromise full compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

Our work focuses on assisting States Parties, at their request, with their domestic legislation that is meant to criminalise activities that are

prohibited under the Convention. Nearly half of our States Parties have adopted legislation that covers all key areas of the Convention. Clearly there is a need to progress further on this matter given its importance. The Secretariat has continued to actively respond to requests submitted by States Parties for assistance in reviewing their legislative instruments.

Another important task ahead of us is to continue promoting the universality of the Convention. This means convincing the 8 remaining States to join the Convention thus making its prohibitions truly universal.

The Secretariat continues to maintain contacts and participate in activities relevant to the objective of achieving universal adherence to the Convention. This is especially true in the context of preparations for a conference expected to be held later this year in Finland on the topic of making the Middle East a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction. The OPCW has been asked to contribute to this effort and we remain prepared to do so whenever required. It is my hope that this endeavour will serve to focus the issue of universality of the Convention in this delicate region.

As the overwhelming majority of countries now subscribe to the obligations established by the Convention, it is not in the interest of the international community to allow exceptions. With the support of our Member States, the Technical Secretariat will continue its efforts to engage with the remaining States not Party.

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OPCW will in the coming years face important decisions. They pertain to reorganising our resources to better serve the new priorities, responding to the march of science and technology and the fast evolving developments in the field of chemistry and production technology. Our key goal is to ensure that the Convention's hard earned prohibitions remain relevant for all times to come.

The active cooperation of States Parties, the chemical industry, the scientific community and the civil society are crucial in further strengthening the CWC regime. The OPCW's progress in chemical demilitarisation represents the strong international consensus against chemical weapons. We need to deploy this same determination to ensuring that chemical weapons will never re-emerge. Such a resolve will allow us to serve the best interests of the international community in terms of upholding and reinforcing this hard earned ban on one of the most inhumane weapons.

I thank you for your attention.