



**THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE  
OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE  
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
The Hague, 2-5 December 2008**

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**STATEMENT  
by Ambassador Bratislav Djordjević,  
Head of the National Authority of the Republic of Serbia  
for the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention,  
made in the general debate on 2 December 2008**

Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Serbia, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau, on your unanimous election to these high offices and the assumption of your duties. Let me assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and support.

We thank the Director-General for a comprehensive report on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and for his introductory statement that will greatly facilitate our deliberations at the Conference. The Technical Secretariat under his able guidance continues to be an effective force without the contribution of which, the implementation of the Convention would not be possible.

We appreciate very much the hard work of the Executive Council and its Chairperson, Ambassador Tomova of Slovakia, as well as the invaluable contribution of the Scientific Advisory Board.

We also join the other delegations in welcoming Lebanon's recent accession to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

We are meeting for the second time this year as the Conference of the States Parties to address the issues of importance to the Convention. The Second Review Conference, held in April this year, has enabled us to review the Convention's implementation in the past five years and to set the goals for our work in the future. This important event, together with the activities undertaken last year in connection with the observance of the tenth anniversary of the Convention, has created a momentum conducive to mobilizing and streamlining our efforts to

shape up the Organisation in order to effectively respond to the challenges that lie ahead. This is why we consider that the momentum should be maintained and even enhanced further, so that this session proves once again the sustained commitment of the States Parties to effective multilateralism.

Chemical demilitarization and verification certainly deserve our utmost attention. While we praise the significant progress achieved so far, and the fact that two States Parties have completed the destruction of their respective stockpiles of chemical weapons, we must maintain the course that should ultimately lead to the complete success – the total elimination of chemical weapons within the final extended deadlines. In this connection, we welcome the useful practice of the Executive Council's visits to the possessor States.

Although the Organisation has almost attained its universality, it is evident that certain "grey areas" still exist and that the final goal for the time being remains elusive. It is necessary to redouble our efforts at all levels to bring on board the States that are outside of the Convention. The sooner, the better, for if we want to be effective, there should be no exceptions.

This should enable the Organisation and its Member States to turn their full attention, in the years to come, to issues of non-proliferation, chemical transfers regime, international cooperation and assistance, thus enabling the Organization to reach every part of the world, ensuring both the full respect for the Convention's provisions and the benefits of the chemical industry in accordance with the Convention. Simultaneously, the Organisation must be prepared to render its important contribution to an effective and coordinated response to the new challenges to international security, posed primarily by terrorism.

If we are to be successful and future-oriented, a prominent place should be given to the implementation of the Convention's provisions nationally. In this regard, cooperation, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, accompanied by an appropriate allocation of funds, including voluntary contributions, should become even more relevant. In addition to a multilateral approach, Member States should focus on making full use of regional and sub-regional capacities and expertise, including the full use of training centres for that purpose.

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished representatives,

My country has been making constant efforts to increase cooperation with the OPCW and its Member States, especially in the field of cooperation and assistance. On this occasion, I am pleased to inform you of some important developments and activities that have taken place in Serbia this year in cooperation with the OPCW.

First, the National Authority of Serbia hosted the Seventh Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Eastern Europe (Belgrade, 3-5 June 2008). The meeting, in which 24 Member States participated, was devoted to the exchange of views among the representatives of National Authorities of Eastern Europe on major issues regarding the implementation of the Convention. National Authority representatives considered issues arising from the practical implementation of the Convention relating to the transfers provisions of the Convention, as well as the role of National Authorities in relation to Customs Authorities. That was an action-oriented meeting, combining both exchanges of

views and presentations as well as visits of a practical nature. The participants visited the Training Centre and Trayal Corporation in Kruševac, and the National Poison Control Centre in Belgrade, where they were given extensive briefings on the activities of these institutions.

Second, the Fourth international basic course on assistance and protection was held at our Training Centre in Kruševac, from 2-6 June 2008. The course, in which 19 participants from 17 Member States took part, was intended to strengthen national capacities under Article X of the Convention.

Third, the national seminar for customs officials was held in Belgrade on 6 June 2008, in which 60 customs officials from Serbia participated.

We are pleased to note that the participants of both the regional meeting and the basic course benefited from the respective addresses made by the OPCW Director-General, who paid a visit to Serbia on that occasion.

I should like to extend my Government's appreciation to all National Authorities and representatives who, by their active participation, contributed to the success of all these events. We appreciate very much the visit of the Director-General to Serbia and his readiness to take an active part in these events, since we are convinced that this is the best way to advance the cause of the Convention and the OPCW. We are also very grateful to the OPCW Technical Secretariat for co-sponsoring the events.

In addition, the useful cooperation with the OPCW Inspectorate Division has continued by organising another round of clinical placement of OPCW medical personnel at the National Poison Control Centre in Belgrade and by hosting the training of OPCW inspectors.

Finally, let me give you a brief update on the national implementation efforts: It is expected that two new draft laws will be adopted by the end of this year or early next year, i.e. the draft law on the implementation of the CWC and the draft law on foreign trade of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods. The Agreement between Serbia and the OPCW on the privileges and immunities of the OPCW, which was signed on 7 March 2008, was sent to the Parliament with a view to its early ratification.

In conclusion, Serbia stands ready to continue and enhance the already well-developed cooperation with the OPCW and its Member States. We will continue to contribute by organising various courses on assistance and protection, training courses for the OPCW inspectors as well as a clinical placement training of the OPCW medical personnel in our medical institutions. We are certainly open to new forms of cooperation and look forward to developing multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman