



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the OPCW
The Hague

Second Review Conference of the CWC
7-18 April 2008
The Hague

Statement by
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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Pakistan offers to you its warm felicitations on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Your election represents an apt tribute to the contribution of brotherly Saudi Arabia to the work of the OPCW as well as a worthy compliment to your own personal diplomatic skills and experience.

My delegation will extend to you its full cooperation and support in ensuring that the results of this Conference are befitting the importance of a true disarmament treaty.

We thank Ambassador Lynn Parker of the United Kingdom for his skilful stewardship of the Working Group that has provided important inputs for the Second Review Conference.

My delegation associates itself with the statement read by the distinguished representative of Cuba on behalf of the Non-aligned members and China.

Mr. Chairman,

In my statement at the last session of the Executive Council, I had mentioned a project in Pakistan called the Wide Area Network (WAN) that is part of a broader framework for the implementation of the CWC in Pakistan.

This system was inaugurated just three days ago and has become operational.

The WAN will automate the collection of import and export data from the chemical industry in Pakistan for preparation of declarations for submission to the OPCW. It would also be a readily accessible resource for the dissemination of information and documents about the OPCW and developments taking place in the field of its mandate.

The system is the result purely of our own initiative and is part of a strategy for interaction and outreach with the industry in order to promote awareness that CWC obligations and inspections need not be considered a burden but a contribution to advancing a national commitment and an international cause.

The reason why Pakistan, a developing country is prepared to spend its precious resources to establish systems that go well beyond the requirements of the Convention are simple.

Pakistan has consistently followed and will continue to pursue a policy of supporting all legal instruments and initiatives that promote disarmament, non-proliferation, regional and international security on a just and equitable basis, and, that recognise the right of all nations to equal security.

The CWC qualifies as such a treaty. Its legitimacy derives from the application of fair principles, as opposed to partial or selective regimes, some of which show a willingness to break their own rules to carve out unprecedented and dangerous exceptions.

The current dismal state of disarmament negotiations provides every reason to protect the fundamental norms embodied in the CWC from similar erosion.

Despite the fact that the Cold War ended nearly two decades ago, other weapons of mass destruction arsenals are in tact together with perilous new declarations governing their possible use.

Deterrence in the past was meant against equal capabilities. Today, mass destruction is threatened even against non-conventional threats, some real, others exaggerated, but none that would justify the unthinkable.

Against the rather grim background where progress in disarmament is hindered by the persistence of double standards, the CWC stands out as a solitary success.

Indeed the operation of the Convention keeps alive the hope that its example might inspire the revival of a genuinely moral, ethical and legal basis for promoting disarmament and arms control elsewhere.

We, therefore, have every reason to uphold and reaffirm our support for the Convention and its continuing effectiveness.

For one, it demonstrates that major powers too can accept limitations on means and methods of warfare; something that is generally wished only for the rest of the world. We are all glad that at least the option of chemical weapons is 'off the table' for everyone.

Secondly. The CWC proves that when treaties are based on uniform standards, their acceptance comes naturally and wholeheartedly. The rapid acceptance of the Convention in every region of the world and a total membership of 183 States Parties is proof of this axiom. We urge the remaining States to join the Convention and we fully support efforts for promoting its universality which would be a boon for both regional and international security.

Third. The Convention provides a practical demonstration of the critical importance of verification. Negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the efficacy of the Convention underscores the validity of the fundamental principle that disarmament and non-proliferation can be effectively promoted through legal instruments that are 'non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable'.

This consensus must be preserved for future negotiations such as the proposal to ban the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. Otherwise, there is no point in

negotiating another treaty like the CTBT which, although for entirely different reasons, is nonetheless in a state of limbo, despite having once been proclaimed as ‘the longest sought hardest fought prize in arms control’.

Fourth. Although some have argued that the CWC does little else but get rid of unneeded weapons of dubious military utility, it must be remembered that the Convention provides not only for the elimination of the so called Cold War chemical weapons arsenals, but it also led to the disclosure of other chemical weapons programmes.

This has proved to be most beneficial in the regional context. Pakistan welcomes the current progress and looks forward to the completion of chemical disarmament in our neighbourhood which will enhance the prospects for additional confidence building and security measures in South Asia.

Fifth. The OPCW’s mechanisms for cooperation have shown the potential of shoring up support for disarmament and non-proliferation instruments when they recognise and promote activities relating to peaceful purposes. These programmes are appreciated and promote a spirit of goodwill even when activities are devoted more to the objectives of Article VII rather than Article XI.

Promoting national implementation through cooperative means is the only prudent and productive approach as illustrated in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

Low levels of reporting under that resolution are the result of its far-reaching demands made untenable by impossible time-frames. The shift from a coercive approach to reaching out to developing countries lacking expertise and resources is a necessary and welcome course correction for the 1540 process.

On our part, we have adopted comprehensive measures including the necessary legislation covering all categories of weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery and established an export control authority to ensure that our international responsibilities in these areas are fulfilled through strong institutional backing and support.

Mr Chairman,

As I mentioned earlier, for reasons of both principle and policy, my delegation will spare no effort to ensure the success of this Conference in order to strengthen an important disarmament treaty - the CWC.

One key measure of our success would be the attitude of the Conference towards the critical issue of completing chemical weapons elimination by the deadline in April 2012. Under the Convention, this deadline cannot be extended any further.

Compliance with the fundamental obligations of the Convention is a serious issue.

Consensus resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly entitled ‘Compliance with Arms Limitation and Disarmament Agreements’ for example, urge “all States Parties to arms limitation and disarmament agreements to implement and comply with the entirety of the spirit and all provisions of such agreements; and , “call upon all Member States to give serious consideration to the implications that non-compliance with any provisions of arms limitation and disarmament obligations has for international security and stability, as well as for the prospects for further progress in the field of disarmament”.

We expect the Review Conference to strongly affirm that the final deadline in April 2012 must be fully respected by all possessor States. Such a call in our view will help the countries concerned to understand clearly the sentiments of States Parties and would encourage them to take the steps necessary to fulfil their obligations, including if necessary, and in the spirit of Article VII, by harmonising domestic regulations that impede destruction activities.

Mr Chairman,

In an effort to assist the work of the Conference the Secretariat has produced a comprehensive document providing an excellent overview of the progress made by the OPCW in different areas pertaining to its work.

Here we would like to thank the Director General for his commendable leadership of the Secretariat. His statement has once again drawn attention to important issues.

We agree with him fully that States Parties are urged under the Convention to keep developments in science and technology and their impact on the operation of the Convention under close review. A number of issues have been highlighted ranging from changes in the structure of chemical production to cutting-edge science and its possible impact on the Convention.

We have carefully studied the relevant reports issued by the Secretariat and have reached the conclusion that our deliberative mechanisms should be able to accommodate a more systematic and thorough approach in order to look carefully and in greater depth to all the available information and data.

We are particularly concerned about the question of what have on different occasions been called either non-lethal agents or incapacitating agents. Irrespective of the terminology used, it is important to bear in mind that the influence of advanced military technologies has often led to a search for exploiting real or perceived loopholes in legal instruments in order to circumvent their prohibitions. It would be unfortunate if the CWC were to be subjected to similar treatment. We believe this issue needs more attention than has so far been devoted to it.

We support the work of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). However, it seems desirable to establish a synapse, between SAB and the Executive Council, perhaps in the

form of an expert group, in order to generate the necessary political support for proposals once they have been determined to be practicable.

In this context, it needs to be mentioned that developing countries are not able to fully participate in such technical discussions owing to resource constraints. Proposals to changes in technical regimes at the OPCW require the fullest participation of all States Parties. Mechanisms to sponsor expert participation, such as those existing in other international bodies, would make discussions on new ground-breaking proposals more inclusive. This could include discussions about industry verification proposals.

On our part, Pakistan has never begrudged inspections at our industrial facilities even though we received more than our fair share of such inspections under the previous site selection methodology. I have already mentioned our own efforts to bring greater coordination and efficiency to the work of our National Authority including its interaction with industry and other stake-holders.

As part of our continuing efforts to support the OPCW, we have included a module on the Convention and the OPCW in the curriculum of Pakistan's Foreign Service Academy from where nearly 1000 diplomats from friendly countries have so far graduated. During the presentation of this module, experts from the Secretariat have been at hand to inform and interact with participants. The programme has been a great success and we thank the Secretariat for continuing to support this activity.

Mr. Chairman,

Together with disarmament and non-proliferation, international cooperation as well as assistance and protection against chemical weapons constitute two essential pillars of the OPCW.

We reaffirm our position that there needs to be enhanced political and material support for programmes in the context of Article X and XI. Pakistan continues to fulfil the requirements of Article X in terms of offering assistance as well as reporting on our relevant programmes. This Article also offers practical avenues of general benefit to OPCW's membership in the context of protection against terrorism.

We stress the importance of full implementation of Article XI. Progress in dismantling unjustified and discriminatory practices in so far as trade and peaceful uses of chemistry are concerned, can only add greater depth and commitment to the CWC.

We look forward to productive discussions on all these issues and to results that will enable the OPCW to continue to remain a beacon in the field of disarmament and international security.

Thank you