



Opening Remarks by the OPCW Deputy Director-General at the Global Stakeholders Forum on the Adoption of National Implementing Legislation on the Chemical Weapons Convention

As delivered on 3 December 2019, The Hague, Netherlands

Excellency Ambassador Mika-Markus Leinonen,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to join you for this Global Stakeholders Forum on the Adoption of National Implementing Legislation on the Chemical Weapons Convention. This is a timely event that aims to help States Parties from different regions to move their legislative processes forward. In this regard, I would like to thank the European Union for their support in organizing this event. Once again, thanks to the EU's generous financial contributions.

More than 20 years after the Convention entered into force, only 119 of 193 States Parties have enacted implementing legislation covering all the initial measures. As we grow closer to completing the destruction of declared chemical weapons, the OPCW is sharpening its focus on preventing their re-emergence.

The full and complete implementation of all States Parties is fundamental in this regard. The threat of non-state actors using toxic chemicals as weapons is now an unfortunate reality. Comprehensive legislation is necessary to ensure that effective chemical security measures are in place to prevent toxic chemicals from being diverted to do harm. Further, laws are needed to act as a deterrent and ensure that violations of the Convention do not go unpunished.

Preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons will not be achieved through national implementing legislation alone, but it is the crucial first step. Indeed, making chemical weapons a thing of the past, will require actions in a wide range of areas and deeper dialogue among key national stakeholders. Raising awareness among all the relevant domestic actors on their roles in national implementation is critical to empowering a State Party to fulfil all its treaty obligations. Accordingly, this forum features a diverse group of participants representing different agencies as well as Parliamentarians.

Over the next three days, you will hear from States Parties about the challenges they have encountered in the development and adoption of their implementing laws, and how they overcame them. This forum will also give you an opportunity to share your own national experiences.

We hope that at the end of this session, you will have developed concrete actions that will enable your country to move closer to adopting the necessary legislation. The Secretariat stands ready to provide you with support and assistance to this end. I wish you all a productive meeting.

Thank you for your kind attention.
