

STATEMENT BY
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UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE
ELEVENTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES
OF THE
ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS
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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by taking this opportunity, Mr. Chairman to express my pleasure that you are serving us once again in a leadership role. I pledge the support of the U.S. delegation to ensuring the success of this Conference of the States Parties and to demonstrating once again that the OPCW is a model for multilateral cooperation. I also wish to say a few words to your predecessor, and express my profound regret that this will be for the last time in this setting, before he soon leaves The Hague. Ambassador Arrospide, your service has reflected honor and credit on Peru and yourself and has enriched this Organization.

I would also like to extend a welcome to those States Parties attending their first Conference. We now have 181 member states, and, with only 14 States not Party remaining, we are closer than ever to our objective of universal adherence to the Convention. As these numbers indicate, there is no place in the modern world for chemical weapons. We, the States Parties, working closely with the Director General and the Technical Secretariat, need to redouble our efforts and reach out directly through bilateral and regional contacts to those states that have unfortunately chosen to remain outside the treaty. We, the

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States Parties, should offer any necessary assistance to facilitate their accession to the Convention, and also send the clear message that joining this treaty is part of being a full member in the community of nations.

More than at any other time since entry into force of the Convention, 2006 has seen States Parties focus on the issue of chemical weapons destruction. Experience has shown that the task of eliminating the legacy of chemical weapons stocks has proven more difficult than any of us imagined. All but one of the declared possessor States have had to request extensions to the 100% percent destruction deadline. While there are great challenges, the commitment to complete destruction of all CW stocks is very clear. Collectively, there are more destruction facilities operating than ever before, and more chemical weapons stocks will be destroyed in 2006 than in any previous year. With these challenges and achievements in mind, the Conference will consider this week the consensus recommendations of the Executive Council on several extension requests. We trust the Conference this week will approach those recommended for approval with its customary judicious and careful consideration.

With respect to the extension requests on which the Executive Council has yet to make consensus recommendations, we believe

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that it will do so very soon and that the Conference will also approve them by consensus. But, in any case, the US remains absolutely and irreversibly committed to destroying 100% of its stockpile, and will make every effort to do so safely and as soon as possible under its federal state and local laws, and under the watchful and continuing scrutiny of the OPCW's inspection regime.

In 2006, there has also been gratifying progress towards full national implementation of Article VII obligations. I want to express our appreciation for the tireless efforts of Ambassador Santiago Oñate, who has spearheaded the work of the Technical Secretariat in this area. We strongly support the consensus agreement reached by the Executive Council for continued work in 2007 on Article VII, and thank the able facilitator, Ambassador Maarten Lak, for his unflagging efforts in this regard.

Much work remains, however, to achieve full implementation of Article VII obligations. With nearly all States Parties having established National Authorities, we must focus our efforts now on enactment of necessary legislation and administrative measures. This means continuing technical support for preparing draft legislation, and, once drafted, offering encouragement, where and as appropriate, to turn it into law. It is

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particularly important that States Parties playing prominent roles in the manufacturing, processing and trade of chemicals fully meet their obligations for national implementation. The United States will continue its efforts to provide assistance in this area, working in complete cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. I am pleased to inform you that U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce Christopher Padilla will be addressing this issue in detail when we reach that agenda item. He will offer some creative proposals on how States Parties can move ahead to strengthen our combined efforts in 2007.

This week we will also consider approving an OPCW budget for 2007. We commend the Director-General for submitting a second consecutive zero nominal growth budget. We believe this budget proposal addresses all the desired program requirements in a manner that is both financially prudent and operationally effective. We have widely agreed that next year we will hold in-depth discussions about Article VI industry inspections. That will satisfy the desire expressed by many to fully explore and understand this area and help us in future years to find common resolve so that budget questions on Art. VI can be addressed with shared purpose and broader understanding. For that reason, we should find the flexibility to allow consensus to be reached for adoption of the 2007 budget, knowing our actions must not

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impugn the technical assessment of risk by the Technical Secretariat on the number and type of inspections. The issue of ensuring an adequate level of inspections at Article VI facilities, particularly OCPFs, will continue to be a shared concern we must address patiently, collegially, and constructively with important input and assistance from the Technical Secretariat.

We also have before us a number of key recommendations from the Executive Council, each addressing longstanding issues of importance to the continued effectiveness of the OPCW. These include the establishment of a Host Country Committee, a proposal from the Director-General regarding implementation of the tenure policy, and an arrangement to regularize payments of arrears that could facilitate greater participation in the Organization.

There are a number of challenging issues that we will need to tackle in 2007. One that is of particular significance is determining a fair and equitable site selection procedure for inspection of other chemical production facilities, or "OCPFs," that appropriately reflects the letter and the spirit of the Convention. Agreement on such a procedure is long overdue and the United States hopes that an agreed approach to this complex

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and critical issue can be reached in 2007. I also hope that there will be an opportunity to discuss questions that have been raised about the process for declaring OCPFs, given the significant resources that will be needed in this area.

Also during 2007, critical preparations will take place for a successful Second Review Conference in the first half of 2008. I want to express our appreciation to Ambassador Lyn Parker who has very capably helped launch our efforts in this regard. The First Review Conference in 2003 set a high bar in terms of reviewing the CWC's achievements and charting a path for the future. I am confident that under Ambassador's Parker's leadership, and with the positive involvement of all delegations, we will be able to match and even exceed that standard.

In 2007, we will also mark the tenth anniversary of entry into force of the Convention. Speaking frankly, I do not believe that this Convention, or this Organization, receives the attention it deserves. Perhaps that is a testament to what together we have been able to achieve here, as all too often the world only pays attention when things go wrong. That said, the events that have been planned to mark this historic milestone are our opportunity to highlight the accomplishments of the

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Convention and the Organization. The United States will support these efforts and encourages others to do so, as well.

The United States strongly believes that the best way for the OPCW to receive the attention it deserves is to build on its consensus and cooperation ethos to preserve, and hopefully enhance, the relevance of the Convention in addressing today's security threats involving the potential hostile use of toxic chemicals. The United States seeks not just a Convention with universal membership, but also a Convention that addresses real security issues, and whose members universally implement their commitments. We all are committed to ensuring the security of our citizens, and we therefore must continue to work to strengthen our collective security net.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Representatives, it has been an honor to address you today. As we prepare for the tenth anniversary of the Convention, we can cite a record of solid accomplishments, particularly in 2006. The United States delegation and I personally, pledge to work with all of you during the course of this Conference, and over the next year, as we address the important issues on our agenda and continue our work in pursuit of a world where the

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possibility of the use of chemical weapons is excluded completely.

Thank you.