

STATEMENT
by H.E. Mr. Vasyl Korzachenko
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Ukraine
to the OPCW, Representative of Ukraine
to the Thirteenth Session of the Conference of States Parties to the
Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
The Hague,
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Mr. Chairman,

First of all I would like to join previous speakers in extending our warmest congratulations to you upon your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Conference. We are convinced, that your skills will allow you to steer successfully the work of the Thirteenth Session of the Conference. In performing your important duties you may completely rely on the full support and co-operation of the delegation of Ukraine.

I would also like to thank the former Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Idris of Sudan for his role and contribution to the success of the previous Twelfth Session of the Conference.

On behalf of my Government I would like to assure you that Ukraine is ready to provide full support to the work of the OPCW Policy-Making Organs and Technical Secretariat, proceeding from its faithful and strict compliance with the CWC provisions.

The delegation of Ukraine associates itself with the Statement delivered by France on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Chairman,

In April 2008 The Second Special Session of the Conference of the State Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention has successfully concluded its work and adopted a final document which will serve as a road map for the CWC implementation during the subsequent five-year period. The Second Review Session has reconfirmed that the Chemical Weapons Convention is widely recognized as the first multilateral instrument, banning the entire class of weapons of mass destruction under a strict and efficient international control and compliance mechanism. The Convention has made a major contribution to strengthening international peace and security and establishing valuable standards for global disarmament and non-proliferation. Its provision for assistance and protection against chemical weapons is unique and inspiring for the countries which never possessed or developed chemical weapons. International cooperation in the peaceful use of chemistry, being also an important pillar of the CWC, was designed to be a powerful incentive for effective universality and comprehensive compliance with The Convention's provisions at the national level.

Effective implementation of the CWC in the past years has brought about broad international consensus that the use of chemical weapons cannot be tolerated, whatever the circumstances. This is an enormous step forward, taking into consideration that the threats and horrors of chemical warfare were real to the international community during the XX-th century. The Delegation of Ukraine wishes to express solidarity with and compassion to all victims of chemical weapons and to support the steps made so far to commemorate their sufferings and broken lives. This humanitarian perspective is an essential element in our assessment of the results achieved in the CWC implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

Chemical disarmament will be the focus of the OPCW in the years to come. Hopefully an increasing number of destruction facilities will start operating both in the Russian Federation and the USA. Like many other delegations we attach particular importance to the timely destruction of chemical weapons' stockpiles, accumulated by the possessor states. In this context we attach particular importance to the completion of destruction by A State Party of its entire stockpiles of chemical weapons and extend our congratulations on this occasion to relevant delegation.

India has also achieved formidable progress in the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles. We expect that by April 2009 India will join those two State Parties which have already eliminated their stockpiles. It is extremely important that all possessor states comply with their obligation to complete their CW destruction programs before the 29 April 2012.

Mr.Chairman,

Universality of the CWC is an important factor in enhancing its credibility and ensuring irreversible character of chemical disarmament in a global dimension. Ukraine highly appreciates the efforts undertaken by OPCW Technical Secretariat and many states in the framework of the Universality Action Plan. In this context we are pleased to salute the Republic of Congo and Guinea-Bissau - two countries that joined the CWC in 2008. Ukraine expects that some other states, which are engaged in internal procedures aimed at ensuring their membership in the OPCW, will attain their goal. In particular we hope to welcome Iraq in the OPCW family sooner rather than later.

We also support the efforts of the EU aimed at convincing several other countries in the Middle East to join the CWC. There is no doubt that OPCW and its members should continue concerted efforts to pave the way for eventual adherence of all countries from the Middle East to the CWC. We therefore expect that the international seminar on the CWC implementation which is planned to be held in Turkey in the next year will produce tangible results.

In general, against the background of growing challenges related to the global financial crisis, climate change, population growth, spread of poverty and diseases, which are pressing on the international agenda, the position of some states to remain outside the regime established by the CWC, seems unwise and outdated.

We believe, however, that an active pace towards the universality of the Convention will be resumed in the next year.

Mr. Chairman,

Since both the chemical industry and science play a growing role in modern society, proper implementation of the Convention by its State Parties on the national level is of critical importance for its viability. We are pleased to note that implementation of basic obligations pursuant to Article VII of the CWC is being actively pursued. Ukraine stands ready to endorse further recommendations to the Conference in this field.

For its part, Ukraine has always displayed utmost responsibility in implementation of its obligations under the international treaties. The unconditional compliance with the CWC remains on the priority list of the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation policy of Ukraine.

The proper compliance with obligations under the Convention is ensured by the National Program on CWC implementation for the ten-year period till 2008, which is now being updated and amended. The report on the implementation of this Program will be reviewed by the highest authorities of Ukraine.

The Verification regime of the OPCW is a crucial element of multilateral control over destruction of chemical weapons, as well as the tool to deter chemical proliferation. Ukraine supports current OPCW activities, aimed at the maintenance of a strict chemical non-proliferation regime. We are in favour of a more equitable and fair methodology in the selection of inspections for the OCPF (organic chemicals production facility), which should focus on inspections of the facilities posing greater risks and diminish the burden of inspection for the countries which possess a relatively small number of OCPF on their territory.

Mr. Chairman,

Ensuring the implementation of Article X of the CWC remains one of the most important tasks for the OPCW and its Members. In this context The National Authority of Ukraine continues consultations with the OPCW Technical Secretariat aimed at concluding bilateral agreement on assistance measures chosen by member states under Article X of the Convention.

We are pleased to inform you that Ukraine was among several State Parties, which hosted in November 2008 a visit of experts from the TS OPCW, aimed at assessing the readiness and reliability of the technical means and human resources offered by Ukraine under Article X. Without prejudice to the conclusions made by

the expert team, Ukraine is pleased that our Ministry of Emergency and the Ministry of Health succeeded in demonstrating the good skills of their personnel and the readiness of special tools and equipment for rescue and emergency missions involving chemical agents.

Due to the rather big scope of the Ukrainian offer and to time constraints, experts failed to visit the facilities of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine. To enhance their preliminary impression about the capacities and means presented by the Armed Forces of Ukraine there is a need for more technical experts' visits, hopefully in 2009.

In the three years since the conduct of the major OPCW-EADRCC (Euro - Atlantic Disaster Relief Coordination Center) "Joint Assistance 2005" exercise (L'viv, Ukraine, 9-13.10. 2005), much is being done to learn lessons and draw conclusions from this event. We are happy to know that States Parties have started to think about conducting new major exercises in the OPCW framework. Ukraine expects that the host country for such exercises will be formally approved soon.

Mr. Chairman,

The activities of the OPCW are based on an efficient budgetary system and we appreciate the efforts of the Technical Secretariat to improve the effectiveness of cost management and measures to reduce some spending. The planned "zero" budget increase, which is not expected to hamper effective functioning of the OPCW, is a very important achievement of the Director-General and his well-experienced team. We hope that the Conference will adopt the OPCW Program and the Budget for 2009 with due consideration of the needs and interests of both the OPCW as a whole and individual States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

At this Session of the Conference we are addressing issues that demand our close attention. The delegation of Ukraine is ready to co-operate fully with the delegations of other States Parties and the OPCW Secretariat and to do its utmost to work for the implementation of the important task of the Organisation aimed at complete elimination of chemical weapons.

Thank you for your attention.