



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Thirteenth Session  
2 – 5 December 2008

C-13/NAT.5  
2 December 2008  
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

**LEBANON**

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF LEBANON,  
AMBASSADOR ZEIDAN AL-SAGHIR,  
TO THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF  
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO  
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
2 DECEMBER 2008\***

Your Excellency, Ambassador Minoru Shibuya, Chairman of the Conference,  
Your Excellency, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first to extend my thanks to the Chairman of this Conference and to his Excellency the Director-General for giving me this opportunity to address you, although Lebanon is still an Observer State.

I have the honour to be the first official to address this august body on behalf of Lebanon.

It is my pleasure to inform you that Lebanon has taken the final step towards completing the procedures for joining the Chemical Weapons Convention, and deposited its instrument of accession thereto on 20 November of this year.

In accordance with paragraph 2 of Article XXI of the Convention, Lebanon will become a State Party on the 30th day following the date of deposit of its instrument of accession, i.e. as of 20 December this year.

I am overwhelmed with joy and pride when I see all the regional groups and other states giving Lebanon this general welcome as it joins this Organisation. Therefore, I wish to extend my warm thanks to all of you who have welcomed and congratulated Lebanon on joining this Organisation. I will not mention any names, lest I forget someone, so I extend my thanks to all of you.

I must commend and warmly thank the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the important role it played by twice sending a high-level delegation to Lebanon to hold consultations with the Lebanese government and provide it with assistance to initiate the implementation of the provisions of this Convention.

---

\* Lebanon participated in the Thirteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties as an Observer State, and the Conference granted it the right to deliver this statement during the general debate.



Lebanon is preparing to take the first steps towards the implementation of all the provisions of this Convention and its obligations thereunder. It will inform the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation of its efforts to implement these provisions and shall not fail to seek assistance, technical or otherwise, whenever necessary, for the implementation of its obligations.

By acceding to this Convention, Lebanon is affirming its belief in peace and its endeavours to achieve a world free of chemical weapons and all weapons of mass destruction, which have inflicted the heaviest losses on mankind.

Lebanon's record is testimony that it has never considered using, stockpiling, proliferating, producing or trading in chemical weapons. Therefore we consider that we have been committed to this Convention even before our accession thereto.

We are convinced that chemical weapons constitute a threat to mankind and that their victims are the civilians, the unarmed and the innocent. Lebanon is considered a leading example with regard to the protection of civilians during armed conflicts, based on principles in which we believe, which we uphold and comply with in real life, and to which we have been unwaveringly committed. Our accession to this Convention truly reflects this commitment.

The universal membership of this Organisation is a lofty goal which we must continue to pursue with unfaltering efforts. Thanks to the efforts that this Organisation has made and continues to make, its membership has increased from 121 on 29 April 1997, the date of entry into force of this Convention, to 185 in 2008, which augurs well for our Organisation being close to achieving universal membership. We should not despair of convincing those who have not yet been convinced of the benefits of a world free of chemical weapons and of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

The last century has witnessed two world wars and many other armed conflicts, in addition to troubles and terrorist acts. This has inflicted awful sufferings on mankind. Millions of people have been killed and millions of others maimed. The damage inflicted by wars is a lingering testimony to what man can commit against his brothers in humanity.

The Middle East region has been experiencing instability for more than sixty years, during which we have suffered from the ordeals of wars waged against us by Israel and from the damage, human casualties and destruction of infrastructure which were inflicted thereby to an extent that is hard to conceive.

Lebanon has chosen the path of peace built on justice, respect of sovereignty and non-aggression. This path, which all of us believe in, is the one that has been charted by the United Nations and its Charter since its inception in 1943.

Mr Chairman,

The first paragraph of the preamble of the Chemical Weapons Convention summarises the most important objective that mankind must strive to achieve. It calls for the prohibition and elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction. This is a primary objective that we should continually keep in mind.

The implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540, which was issued in 2004, after the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, represents an important part of the

work of this Organisation, as it covers nuclear, chemical and biological weapons considered to be a threat to international peace and security.

Let us act together, everyone in his respective field of competence, to free our world from all types of weapons of mass destruction. Let the Middle East region, which is the cradle of revealed religions, be also the cradle of peace, by making it free of all types of weapons of mass destruction, i.e. nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Last year, our Organisation celebrated the tenth anniversary of its creation. As we look back on what has been accomplished over the last ten years, we note that much has been achieved and that many a task also lies ahead of us.

Achieving our objective of a world totally free of chemical weapons on 29 April 2012 will be a source of joy for the world and pride for our Organisation. This hope, as was said by his Excellency the Director-General at the United Nations, during the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of this Convention, “demands unremitting efforts on the part of major possessor states”.

Mr Chairman,

I am eagerly looking forward to participating in your work as a representative of a State Party. I express once again our commitment to, and compliance with, the provisions of this Convention and its annexes, as a commitment on our part to the culture of security and peace, and wish that this statement be distributed to all participants of this Conference as one of its documents.

Thank you.

--- 0 ---