



**14th SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
The Hague, 30 November - 4 December 2009**

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**STATEMENT
by Ambassador Bratislav Djordjević,
Head of National Authority of the Republic of Serbia
for the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention,
made in the general debate on 1 December 2009**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Serbian delegation, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau, on your unanimous election to these high offices and the assumption of your duties. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and support.

I should also like to thank the OPCW Director-General for his comprehensive report and important opening statement which not only pinpointed the main results in the Organisation's work between the two conference sessions, but also laid down a solid basis for the further consideration of the issues on the agenda. Since this conference is the last opportunity in this format before the expiration of the Director-General's tenure, my delegation would like to convey the appreciation of my Government for the substantive contribution of Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter to the work of our Organisation and the results achieved, particularly for guiding the work of the Technical Secretariat with the great efficiency.

At the same time, we owe a gratitude to the Executive Council, for having shown a true example of effective multilateralism, for recommending by consensus, Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcu of Turkey, for the post of new Director-General. On this occasion, our congratulations go both to the Executive Council Members and Ambassador Uzumcu.

Mr. Chairman,

On a number of occasions it has been pointed out that the Chemical Weapons Convention is a successful disarmament and non-proliferation instrument that stood the test of time. The very fact that the OPCW now has 188 Member States testifies to the constant progress the

Organisation and its Member States have been making. We call upon the seven remaining UN Member States to join the Convention without delay.

The progress has been achieved in many fields, but we must not lose sight of a serious challenge in the area of the destruction of chemical weapons, since the final extended deadline is approaching fast. While we are encouraged by the political commitment of the two major possessor States Parties and the momentum preserved, we must note that we are already half-way through the deadline, which may require taking new decisions in this regard. If we are to preserve the effectiveness of the Organisation and the reliability of the Convention, action is needed rather sooner than later.

A successful completion of this process would enable the OPCW and its Member States to focus more on other important obligations set out in the Convention, such as non-proliferation, assistance and protection and peaceful uses of chemistry, in order to effectively face the new challenges that lie ahead.

If we are future-oriented, more prominent place should be given to the implementation of the Convention's provisions nationally. In this regard, cooperation, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, accompanied by an appropriate allocation of funds, including voluntary contributions, should become even more relevant. In addition to a multilateral approach, Member States should focus more on making full use of regional and sub-regional capacities and expertise, including the full use of training centres for that purpose.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished representatives,

Since my country has been making constant efforts to increase cooperation with the OPCW and its Member States, especially in the field of assistance and protection and the implementation of Article VII provisions, I would like to inform you of some important developments and activities that have taken place in Serbia this year.

First and foremost, the Serbian Parliament adopted last May, the new Law on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, thus entirely replacing the previous Law of 2005. While the adoption of the new CWC implementation law represents the significant result in terms of Article VII, we intend to constantly update our legislation with a view to achieving full and effective implementation of the Convention. Work is also underway on a new Law on foreign trade in weapons, military equipment and dual-use goods, in order to include in it the latest achievements regarding export-import control of scheduled chemicals. In this regard, we are grateful to the OPCW Legal Adviser's Office for their useful comments.

In view of our close cooperation with the OPCW, we have also ratified the Agreement on the privileges and immunities of the OPCW, thus giving the full effect to the provisions of Article VIII (E) of the Convention.

As part of our standing offer under Article X, the Fifth international basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons was held last June at our NBCD Training Centre in Kruševac, which soon will be converted into a regional centre. The course once again confirmed its usefulness as a practical tool to exchange the views among the

participants from all over the world on how to find the best way to address the current and future needs of States Parties in this important field.

We are also pleased that the training of medical personnel of the OPCW Inspectorate has continued at the clinics of the Military Medical Academy in Belgrade.

In addition to the hosting of a regular basic course on assistance and protection, planned for the next year, we are considering how to extend our appropriate support to the Programme for Africa.

The recent appointment of our expert to serve on the Scientific Advisory Board will certainly represent an additional incentive for our scientists and other stakeholders to be even more active regarding their respective roles in the implementation of the Convention and promotion of the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes.

Mr Chairman,

Last but not least, Serbia has joined the efforts with other States Parties of our region with a view to enhancing the regional and sub-regional cooperation in the implementation of CWC and other international obligations, particularly regarding WMD non-proliferation and UNSCR 1540 (2004). At the meeting held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the OPCW and a number of other international governmental and non-governmental organisations, an Implementation Programme Against CBRN Terrorism was launched, which should assist the States Parties in the region to develop more coherent, effective and sustainable national strategies to counter WMD proliferation, in line with international obligations, in partnership with all the organisations and agencies that are working towards effective non-proliferation implementation in their respective fields of responsibility and competence.

For its part, Serbia has already expressed its readiness to cooperate with other States Parties in the region and other interested States and international organisations, in order to render a substantive contribution to this important project. At the same time, the effective and timely realisation of the project will depend also on an appropriate funding. We hope that all those that are in a position to do so, should contribute to the project. Since all the States in the region are the parties to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, we believe that the EU should be our natural partner in this endeavour.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Serbia stands ready to continue and enhance the already well-developed cooperation with the OPCW and its Member States. We will continue to be active in the field of assistance and protection, but we are also prepared to explore other areas with a view to further developing multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman