

Statement to the 14th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) by Ambassador Mrs. Grace Asirwatham, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the OPCW

Mr. Chairman

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as Chairperson of the 14th Conference of the States Parties (CSP). I am confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will be guided towards a successful conclusion and I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would also like to thank the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Minoru Shibuya of Japan for his competent leadership to the 13th CSP. My delegation would like to thank the Director General and his team for the excellent organisation of the Conference and his comprehensive statement on the activities and progress made in the organisation during the year.

Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention for its objective to take concerted international action to destroy chemical weapons and prevent proliferation of chemical weapons. While recognising the progress made in the implementation of the Convention, my delegation considers it important for all of us to demonstrate sustained commitment to the obligations under the Convention to achieve the ultimate success of the Convention.

In this regard, the desired goal can be achieved if the States Parties implement the Convention in letter and spirit. In particular, we are concerned that the destruction of all chemical weapons and production facilities should be completed within the extended deadline. We call upon all Possessor States to honour their responsibility under the Convention to complete their destruction process of all declared stockpiles to keep up the progress in the implementation and to maintain the credibility of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman

I am happy to inform that the Government of Sri Lanka continues to take action to fulfil her obligations under Article VII of the Convention on National Implementation Measures. Having enacted and enforced a national legislation for implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the National Authority is engaged in preparing Annual Declaration and the Aggregate National Data for Anticipated Activities (ADAM) for the year 2010.

The National Authority in Sri Lanka has developed a draft national plan for chemical emergencies. The National Authority also functions as a lead technical agency in case of a chemical emergency in the country. In order to enhance the national capability to manage chemical emergencies, the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW as provided under Article X of the CWC has conducted a series of training programmes to develop the Response Specialities on Chemical Weapons agents and Toxic Industrial Chemicals. The delegation wishes to thank the Technical Secretariat for the training assistance and cooperation extended to Sri Lanka.

Mr. Chairman,

Having successfully defeated terrorism of nearly three decades, Sri Lanka is taking measures to prevent recurrence of terrorism as well as working out a lasting political solution to transform the military victory in to a permanent peace in the country.

Sri Lanka will continue to work with the international community against all forms and manifestations of terrorism. In this connection, Sri Lanka remains fully committed to the successful implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention to create a world free of Chemical Weapons.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation is pleased with the transparent and inclusive process followed by the 58th Session of the Executive Council to select a consensus candidate for the position of next Director General for the approval of the Conference. In this regard we commend the EC Chairperson Ambassador Jorge Lomonaco for his constructive role and hard work towards a successful conclusion of the process. My delegation welcomes the Council's nomination of Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcu of Turkey to be the next Director General.

I would like to place on record our deep appreciation to the outgoing Director-General Mr. Rogelio Pfirter for his commitment to the objectives of the Convention and excellent leadership to the Secretariat for the last 8 years. His contribution to the progress of the OPCW is remarkable. This Conference will be his last CSP and we sincerely hope that with his experience in Chemical Weapons Convention, disarmament and other security related issues and wealth of diplomatic skills, he will continue to work to contribute towards global peace and security. We thank him for his dedicated service and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation remains confident that our deliberations will facilitate accelerating the process of implementation of the Convention. In conclusion my delegation reaffirms its commitment to work together with all the States Parties and the Secretariat to realize the objectives of the Convention.

Thank you.