



Statement by Ambassador Uđur Dođan

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to the OPCW

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STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

(The Fourteenth Conference of the States Parties, 30 November-4 December 2009,
The Hague)

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to extend my Delegation's compliments to Ambassador Vaidotas Verba of Lithuania, for his election to the Chairmanship of the Fourteenth Conference of the States Parties. We are of the firm belief that Ambassador Verba's well respected diplomatic skills together with the vast experience and dedication of the Director General of the OPCW Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, will help ensure the success of this conference. They will have the full cooperation and support of the Turkish Delegation.

Our gratitude also goes to the Ambassador of Japan, HE Minoru Shibuya who with great diligence chaired the Thirteenth Conference of the States Parties last year.

We also extend our thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Oksana Tomova of Slovakia and Ambassador Jorge Lomonaco Tonda of Mexico, the respective Chairpersons of the Executive Council for their diligent and dedicated work.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey has aligned itself with the EU Statement made by the Ambassador of Sweden, HE Hans Magnusson. Nevertheless, I would like to touch upon several issues which are, I believe, important for this body and my country.

Mr. Chairman,

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has a noble aim to eliminate entire chemical weapons in a non-discriminatory and verifiable manner. To achieve this aim, universality and full implementation of the obligations under the Convention by all State Parties are essential.

Turkey attaches great importance to the universality of the Convention. We are pleased to note that after the accession of Iraq, Dominican Republic and Bahamas in 2009, States Parties to the Convention have increased to a total of 188. There are 7 States left not party to the Convention. I would like to emphasize that the objective of the Convention will not be fully realized as long as there remains even a single state not party that could possess or acquire chemical weapons. Therefore, we strongly urge all 7 States to ratify or accede to the Convention as a matter of urgency and without any preconditions. We should keep the momentum until all States become party to the Convention.

I would like to remind the Conference that Turkey, in coordination with the Technical Secretariat and with the support of the European Union, hosted the fourth regional

workshop on universality of the Convention in the Mediterranean Basin and in the Middle East Region, on 16 and 17 April 2009, in Istanbul. By taking this initiative, Turkey wished to complement efforts by the EU and the OPCW to promote the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention, for which we are thankful.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to touch upon the implementation of one of the core objectives of the CWC, namely the elimination of all chemical weapons and their production facilities. Since the entry into force of the Convention, over 50 % of declared stockpile of Category 1 chemical weapons have been destroyed. After Albania and “A State Party”, India, deserves appreciation, as the third possessor State Party that completely eliminated its declared chemical weapons stockpile under the CWC. This is an important step towards reaching a chemical weapons free world. We believe that this achievement will contribute to the reduction of the threats to global security and promoting international peace.

We are confident that other possessor States will also make every effort to meet their obligations stemming from the Convention to achieve complete and irreversible destruction of their chemical weapons within the deadlines set by the CWC. In any case, final deadlines set by the Convention in order to complete the destruction of the chemical weapons should not be exceeded.

Mr. Chairman,

Verification is another core objective of the Convention which provides for systematic on-site monitoring of the destruction of chemical weapons and production facilities. The verification regime also creates an opportunity to monitor the activities not prohibited under the Convention. We are pleased that the OPCW has established an effective verification system. So far, the OPCW inspection teams have conducted more than 3800 inspections of chemical weapon related and industrial sites without any case of non-compliance. Verification regime is based upon declarations; therefore, the declarations should be submitted accurately and updated in a timely manner, in order to improve the efficiency. In this context, implementation of Verification Information System, including the option of submitting declarations in electronic form, has positive effects to enhance accuracy and efficiency of the work related to verification issues. Furthermore, we recognize the need to keep verification regime up-to-date in accordance with the developments in science and technology.

Mr. Chairman,

Yet, another important issue is industry cluster activities. We welcome the consultations on the topic of “Enhancement of OCPF Declarations” and the decision on “Low Concentration of Schedule 2 (2A and 2A*) Chemicals” taken by the Executive Council at its Fifty-Eighth Session. We also expect that consultations on “OCPF Site Selection Methodology” under the industry cluster will commence soon.

Under the industry cluster topic, I would like to recall that Turkey hosted a sub-regional seminar on chemical industry related issues for States Parties in the Mediterranean Basin on 24 and 25 September 2009, in Istanbul. We believe that this event contributed to the better implementation of Article VI of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Effective national implementation of the Article VII obligations is crucial for the success of the Convention and plays an indispensable role for our common security. In order to fulfill this obligation, States Parties should establish a National Authority and take legislative and administrative measures to implement the Convention. Turkey acknowledges the progress made on implementation of Article VII obligations, however it is obvious that there is much more work to be done and further efforts are required worldwide in this field.

Mr. Chairman,

Assistance and protection against chemical weapons continues to be an equally important topic. It is crucial to give an effective and timely response in case of use of chemical weapons. We support ongoing endeavors and appreciate efforts of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to achieve this goal. In this context, I would like to inform the Conference that Turkey will participate with a medical team in the third exercise on delivery of assistance, ASSISTEX 3, which is to be held from 11 to 15 October 2010, in Tunisia.

Turkey attaches great importance to Article XI of the Convention which is economic and technological development. International cooperation in this field avails States Parties to develop capacities required to implement the Convention and use of chemicals for peaceful purposes. In this regard, we support the initiative to convene a workshop in 2010 on exploring concrete measures to improve the implementation of Article XI of the CWC.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to touch particularly on chemical terrorism which is a real threat to all States Parties. Despite the fact that the Convention is not a counter terrorism treaty, it has capability and tools to fight against chemical terrorism. In this context, we believe that the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention constitutes a contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts. At this point, we also recall the decision of the Council (EC-XXVII/DEC.5, dated 7 December 2001) related to the OPCW's contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts, which is still relevant today.

I also would like to emphasize the importance of the cooperation to fight against chemical terrorism among the OPCW, States Parties and other international organizations. We believe that the UN Security Council resolution 1540 and the UN "Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy", will enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. The strategy encourages the OPCW to continue its efforts,

within its respective mandate, in helping States to build a capacity to prevent terrorists from accessing chemical materials, to ensure security at related facilities, and to respond effectively in case of an attack using such materials.

Mr. Chairman,

My country is proud to fulfill its national implementation obligations as well as other obligations deriving from the Convention. Turkey attaches particular importance to policies on arms control and disarmament. Considering global arms control and disarmament as a major aspect of its foreign policy, my Government supports complete disarmament efforts worldwide. Turkey reaffirms its commitment to the goals of the Convention. In this vein, Turkey hosted the fourth regional workshop on universality of the Convention and a sub-regional seminar on chemical industry related issues for States Parties in 2009.

Mr. Chairman,

Now, I would like to touch upon the issue of the appointment of the Director-General. In accordance with its commitment to arms control and disarmament in general and to the CWC in particular, the Government of Turkey nominated Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü as candidate for the post of Director-General of the OPCW. We are proud to see that he has been recommended to the CSP by consensus, to be the next Director-General. This recommendation of the Executive Council is to be approved by the CSP during this session. This consensus decision is an illustration of successful multilateralism within this Organisation. My government expresses its gratitude to the States Parties for their confidence and support.

We are confident that Ambassador Üzümcü will be successful in leading the Organisation towards attaining the objectives of the Convention, in view of his extensive politico-military knowledge and his experience in the administrative matters.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not least, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have invested their time and energy for creating a world, free of chemical weapons. In that respect, I wish to express my appreciation once again for the diligent work conducted by the Technical Secretariat under the able and wise supervision of the Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter.

Mr. Chairman,

The Turkish Delegation looks forward to working with you and with the Secretariat constructively in the coming days and pledges its full support for the successful completion of the Conference.

Thank you.