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States parties to the CWC must also consider the threat posed by non-states

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[Madam Chair, Director-General](#), Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to have the privilege of speaking before such a select group of distinguished personalities.

Allow me to begin, first, by congratulating the OPCW and its Director General Mr. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, once again, for the Nobel Peace Prize awarded a year ago, which was certainly well-deserved.

Director General Üzümcü and the Organization must also be congratulated for the extremely crucial as well as courageous mission that they accomplished over the last year and a half with respect to the complex and complicated process of eliminating Syria's chemical weapons arsenal. I'd like to take this opportunity to express my personal indebtedness in my own academic capacity. Thank You!

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I had the same honor and the privilege of speaking at this podium some 18 months ago, during the Third Review Conference held in April 2013.

I had briefly presented my thoughts on the implications of the Arab Spring for the universalization of the CWC by placing emphasis on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

I had said that, it was difficult to be hopeful with regard to the goal of universality of the CWC, and, due to the turmoil in Syria, a growing concern was the safety and security of the chemical weapons arsenal as well as the possible use of these weapons that were at the disposal of the Assad ~~government~~.

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Hence, I had called for more effective involvement of the world's leading powers, such as the United States and the Russian Federation, in the international efforts to settle the situation in Syria.

A little more than a year ago, in September 2013, this effective involvement of the two leading powers came, but unfortunately only one month after the tragic use of chemical weapons in the suburbs of the Syrian capital city Damascus that claimed the lives of more than 1,500 innocent civilians.

In the aftermath of the tragic incident, the two leading powers have done a marvelous job by combining their efforts to compel the Assad ~~government~~ in Syria to ~~accede to~~ the CWC, thereby launching the process of dismantling the Syrian chemical weapons capability.

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Since then, however, the world has undergone dramatic changes. The excitement about the popular movements that took place in the Middle East and North Africa, dubbed the *Arab Spring*, has been replaced with anxiety due to the developments in countries like Egypt, Libya, Iraq and Syria in particular.

The hopes for transforming the MENA region to a more democratic environment have dissipated due to the military take over (again) in Egypt, chaos in Libya, and the horrible acts of ISIS/ISIL, the so-called “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/Levant” in these respective countries.

The current situation calls for even more urgently than ever the concerted efforts of the civilized world against the medieval-age structures which may push the level of their atrocities to unprecedented extremes.

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The possibility of unauthorized access to the chemical weapons and/or the chemical agents that could be weaponized, without much difficulty in the hands of such non-state actors who wouldn't mind using them in their attacks against unprotected population centers, must be taken seriously into consideration. While the CWC was never designed to address non-state actors, as we now see in the Middle East and elsewhere, it places more burden on all of us to safely eliminate any remaining chemical weapons arsenals in a timely way before they are stolen, lost, or proliferated to non-state actors for nefarious purposes.

Nevertheless, it is unfortunate to see that, at this highly critical moment in history, the leading powers of the world have been fallen apart due to the developments in Ukraine, whose implications are certainly serious.

I would like to conclude with a Turkish proverb, which I could translate as follows: “better to have a wise enemy, than an ignorant friend”.

Hence, it is time for the wise people of the world to get together again so that wisdom prevails in the civilized world in the fight against those who want to drag us toward the dark ages.

Thank you for your attention.