



OPCW

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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
AT ITS NINTH SESSION**

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. I would like to start by extending a warm welcome to all of you to the Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.
2. I am particularly happy to see that a good and old friend, Mr Krzysztof Paturski of Poland, is the newly elected Chairman of our Conference. Mr Paturski needs no introduction: He is an expert on OPCW matters and has already demonstrated, as Chairman of the Executive Council in 1999 and 2000, the qualities of a consensus-builder in the best traditions of the OPCW. This was demonstrated once again a few weeks ago when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted its annual resolution in support of the Convention.
3. The outgoing chairwoman, Ambassador Farida Ariffin of Malaysia, has served us with distinction throughout a very important year for the OPCW. For this we are all deeply grateful, and I sincerely hope we shall continue to benefit from her contributions and her wisdom for many years to come.
4. Let me also extend the warmest of welcomes to all delegates from capitals and the special representatives that are honouring us with their presence this week.
5. We come to this Session of the Conference with a real sense of satisfaction at the significant accomplishments of the Organisation over the last 12 months, but at the same time we must recognise that much more has yet to be done across the agenda of the OPCW, particularly in the key areas of universality, national implementation, and international cooperation and assistance.
6. It is easy to forget that, just over 12 months ago, at the Eighth Session of the Conference, we were celebrating the achievements of the First Review Conference, in particular the adoption, during the Eighth Session, of the action plans that had been launched as a result of the First Review Conference. Today, there is much to be said about what has been done since the last regular Session.



7. The enduring and positive highlights of the past year include the new States Parties that have acceded to or ratified the Convention, in particular the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which joined just a few weeks after the closing of the Eighth Session of the Conference.
8. In retrospect, it seems clear that this accession brought with it a renewed sense of relevance and purpose to both our Convention and the Organisation. The process of disarmament taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya confirms the validity of multilateral organisations and the invaluable part they play in creating and preserving international peace and security.

Verification

9. Since the last Session of the Conference, three more chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) have been declared, by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. One of these will be destroyed, and the Council has recommended that the while the other two will be converted, if, as is expected, the Conference approves the Council's recommendation, and subject to the approval of a change to Part V of the Verification Annex to the Convention regarding the conditions for conversion.
10. As we speak, out of 64 CWPFs worldwide, 35 have been certified as destroyed and 13 as converted. Seven others are to be destroyed before 29 April 2007. It is reassuring that, given the current pace of destruction activities, the deadline for destruction of all CWPFs—namely, 10 years after entry into force of the Convention—can be met. Moreover, 5 of the 9 CWPFs to be converted for purposes not prohibited by the Convention are in the final stages of conversion.
11. As regards the destruction of chemical weapons, we have witnessed a significant effort by possessor States Parties to meet their obligations. As at 1 November 2004, 4 of the 6 possessor States Parties had destroyed approximately 10,048 metric tonnes of chemical-warfare agent under OPCW verification—a figure representing more than 14.3% of the total stockpiles declared. A chemical weapons destruction facility (CWDF) in India has destroyed 45% of that country's declared stockpile and completed its operations. A new CWDF has started operations in Umatilla in the United States of America, and three other large-scale CWDFs are about to come on line in the United States of America and in India. India, the only State Party that is actually ahead of schedule in its destruction operations, has already submitted a verification plan for the new CWDF, which will be considered by the Council at its Thirty-Ninth Session. In so doing, India has continued to show an exemplary level of compliance deserving of the fullest praise.
12. You will recall that last year the United States of America and the Russian Federation submitted requests for extensions of the deadlines for destruction of 45% of their Category 1 chemical weapons stockpiles. The Conference at its Eighth Session granted these extensions, and at this Session you have before you the requests by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and by Albania for extensions of the intermediate deadlines for the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapon stockpiles.

13. Efforts continue both in the United States of America and the Russian Federation to comply with the very demanding but clear deadlines imposed by the Convention. The progress being made in the destruction campaign in another State Party is also very encouraging.
14. The steady addition of new CWDFs in the United States of America is a welcome confirmation that it is addressing its obligations under the Convention with determination. This effort entails huge investments involving the construction of facilities and complex feats of engineering, all realised at considerable financial cost. The determination of the American officials involved in the destruction campaign deserves our fullest praise.
15. The Russian Federation has demonstrated a similar commitment, in the presence of an even greater challenge to meet its destruction deadlines. A comprehensive plan for the construction of new facilities has been set out, and I remain convinced that the political determination of the Russian government will ensure that it is carried out successfully. Indeed, the recent allocation by the Duma of significantly greater financial resources to its destruction programme indicates that the Russian Federation is conscious of the fast-approaching deadlines and of the absolute necessity of fully implementing the Convention.
16. Our overall verification figures have been remarkable, with nearly two thousand inspections conducted in CWPFs, in chemical weapons storage facilities (CWSFs), and in CWDFs, as well as in the industrial facilities, in more than 70 Member States, that produce, consume, or process scheduled chemicals; and in other chemical production facilities (OCPF).
17. Industry verification remains one of my priorities, commensurate with its importance as a crucial factor in the deterrent provided by the Convention.
18. To our great satisfaction, all inspections have been carried out smoothly and with the full support of the inspected State Parties. As at 30 October, the Secretariat had completed 323 inspections at CWPFs, 463 at CWDFs, 253 at CWSFs, 137 at Schedule 1 facilities, 273 at Schedule 2 facilities, 136 at Schedule 3 facilities, and 221 at OCPFs. These, together with other types of specialised inspections, bring us to a grand total of 1892 inspections, all conducted to the full satisfaction of States Parties.
19. This year we also began subsequent inspections of Schedule 3 and OCPF sites. Here, too, everything has passed off very well and to the full satisfaction of both the Secretariat and the States Parties concerned. As indicated in the Draft Programme and Budget for 2005, this year we are proposing a moderate increase in the number of industry inspections, in accordance with the proportional distribution of verification activities across different categories of facility subject to inspection. In this we have respected the political understandings arrived at among Member States.
20. Over the last few months I have continued my systematic contacts with industry by making sure that each bilateral visit I have conducted has had as an integral part a substantive dialogue with industry representatives. In this regard, I wish to reiterate my appreciation for the continued and steadfast support for the Convention shown by

the International Council of Chemical Associations, as well by national and regional chemical associations.

21. Our declaration and verification regimes in the industry area need to keep pace with a changing reality, which, unlike the situation regarding chemical weapons, is constantly influenced by technological and economic changes and by changes in the market. With these in mind we have been consistently drawing Member States' attention to areas such as declarations of transfers and generally to the trade-related provisions of the Convention, and we have been supporting their efforts in that regard. We must take stock of the conclusions drawn after several years of implementation of the Convention in this sensitive area. Discussion of the existence of discrepancies and of the often-considerable gaps in the information the Secretariat receives is not enough. The meetings on practical aspects of the Convention's transfers regime held in Riva-Vaciamadrid in 2002, in Barcelona in 2003, and in Buenos Aires this past September have between them allowed the systematic consideration of this issue by our policy-making organs; and I hope that we can report to you next year that we have made tangible progress in this key area of our work.
22. Another issue that demands our attention is the increasing application of new technologies in the chemical industry. The introduction of micro- and mini-reactors, to cite but one relevant trend, is slowly but dramatically altering the field of work our inspectors are supposed to operate in. The Secretariat has started to look into this trend, and I hope that the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), when augmented by the five additional seats that the Council has graciously recommended you approve, will also analyse it and provide us with useful guidance on the matter. The SAB has already started work on recommendations regarding how the OPCW might collect and analyse biomedical samples, a verification method specifically foreseen by the Convention for investigations of alleged use of chemical weapons, but which the OPCW is not yet able to apply.
23. Training for inspections is another priority we have not left unattended, but that will require considerably more attention in the future. This year two new groups of inspectors have begun their terms of service—the first new groups since the early days of the Secretariat. The selection of another group is already underway, and we should see some 12 to 15 new inspectors arrive early next year as turnover continues in connection with the OPCW policy on tenure. I am happy to report that, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated staff, most of the training activities have been carried out in-house, and thus at considerable savings to States Parties. We have also continued to benefit from generous offers from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and, most recently, Italy. Training and development are all too often overlooked when it comes to defining budgetary priorities, and we need to remedy that oversight in order to preserve the efficiency and professionalism of this central activity of the Secretariat. This year, our inspectors reached an important milestone—100,000 inspector days—a most remarkable achievement that is testimony to the seriousness and zeal with which inspections are carried out in government facilities and private concerns alike all over the world.
24. Before concluding my remarks on verification, I would like to remind you that the Secretariat continues to prepare for the eventuality of challenge inspections. Just a few days ago another challenge-inspection exercise took place in Switzerland, this

time involving the key practice of sampling and analysis. Earlier in the year the Vienna Seminar, which was organised by the EU, and another exercise in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were also important events that helped refine our collective skills in an area where we simply cannot under-perform.

International cooperation and assistance

25. Let me turn now to international cooperation and assistance. This is an important core objective of the Organisation and I am therefore determined to support it and bring its programmes to fruition, especially for the benefit of developing nations that have renounced chemical weapons. Let me give you some noteworthy examples in this regard that I think show that these programmes are indeed most worthwhile.
26. In 2004, we organised for the first time a course on the development of analytical skills. It was designed to assist qualified analytical chemists in Member States whose economies are either developing or in transition, in acquiring further experience and practical knowledge in the analysis of chemicals directly relevant to the Convention. This year we hosted 20 participants. We hope to do more in the future, and aim to double that number as soon as is feasible. This course is helping these Member States to adopt good laboratory practices and to broaden the pool of chemists versed in and aware of the importance of the chemical weapons ban.
27. As regards the exchange of scientific and technical information, since the Eighth Session of the Conference the OPCW has been able to support as many as 26 scientific conferences, symposia, and workshops in various parts of the world, thanks to its Conference Support Programme. During this period the OPCW has sponsored the attendance at these gatherings of no fewer than 236 experts from 70 countries, and in so doing has helped them broaden their knowledge of a range of scientific topics relevant to the Convention.
28. The Associate Programme has gone from strength to strength. It doubled in size last year, accommodating 24 participants. We have already invited technical experts from 69 Member States to participate in the Programme, which is growing and diversifying as more countries have expressed an interest in hosting it. For example, this year we were able to send experts to Japan, whose support I would like to take this opportunity to recognise.
29. As regards assistance and protection, the Secretariat continues to receive an increasing number of requests from Member States for help in developing their individual and collective capacities to protect themselves against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons.
30. Our ongoing assistance-and-protection projects in the Middle East and Central Asia are nearing completion. When they end in 2005, the next phase will benefit some Member States who also belong to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and others in the Persian Gulf and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

31. This year we also made a modest contribution to the successful outcome of the Olympic Games in Athens by organising a number of courses for first responders. We are now helping Qatar in a similar vein as it prepares for the Asian Games, to be held in Doha in 2006.
32. A few words now about our field exercises: The Secretariat is currently preparing for ASSISTEX 2, which will hopefully be held in Ukraine next year. Now that we have taken stock of the lessons we learned from our first exercise in Croatia, ASSISTEX 1, the OPCW's participation will be focussed this time on refining our skills and capacities in investigating the alleged use of chemical weapons. We are currently working with the host nation and other participants in this important exercise to ensure that it produces the best and most-useful results.
33. The recently concluded Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities has brought to a close an intense year of implementation-support activities. The coverage of our programmes has expanded at the global, regional, and subregional levels, with a particular emphasis on Africa. These activities seek to meet the targets set forth in the plan of action regarding the implementation of Article VII obligations. The Conference at its Eighth Session undertook to review at both its Ninth and Tenth Sessions the progress made in implementing the plan of action, and to decide on any further action needed to ensure compliance by all States Parties with Article VII. These milestones give added focus and impetus to meeting those targets. I wish to reiterate that the Secretariat will continue to assist in the process of implementing the plan of action by providing the policy-making organs with analyses of progress made and any problems encountered, by rendering Member States implementation support to Member States such as training, legislative and technical assistance, and any other support they request. We also need to ensure that the new Member States that have joined the OPCW in recent months reach the required level of national implementation as quickly as possible.
34. Before concluding my remarks on international cooperation and assistance, let me offer one last thought. As in past years, the ongoing deliberations on the budget have witnessed some exchanges on the size of what we might call the envelope reserved within it for international cooperation and assistance. I have been asked—in some cases repeatedly—about the nature of the programmes, their content, and the real value they provide.
35. This is why I appeal to all delegations to actively and enthusiastically support the work that our Facilitators on international cooperation and assistance, the distinguished delegates from Brazil, Fabio Antibas, and from Mexico, Erasmo Lara Cabrera, will undertake early in 2005. My expectation is that, through open dialogue we will be able to assess thoroughly the achievements of our programmes on international cooperation and assistance, the issues that remain to be resolved, the challenges that lie ahead, and the extent of the resources required for international cooperation and assistance in the 2006 Programme and Budget. My sincere hope is that through this dialogue will be able to arrive at a better and more fully defined understanding of what we really want and of how we can get it. The new, results-based approach we are taking in producing our Programme and Budget can only make this task easier.

36. I hope you will support this initiative, which aims at moving us beyond the present situation, in which the same rigid positions are trotted out during the Budget negotiations and symbolic sums are thrown at the problem at the eleventh hour for the sake of some short-lived political compromise.

Universality

37. Last year I shared with you my satisfaction at the level of membership we had attained at that time: 157 States Parties. Today, I cannot hide my even greater satisfaction at our continued growth, which means that the OPCW family proudly counts 167 States as its members.
38. I am particularly pleased to report that half of these new Member States come from Africa. Two years ago we announced and began implementing a plan of action for Africa. Today, 43 of the 53 countries in Africa are States Parties to the Convention. This is a clear indication that the efforts made jointly by African Member States and the Secretariat are bearing fruit. Our work with the African Union (AU) has also conducted to this satisfactory outcome, and we need to continue in this direction.
39. Solid progress has also been made in Asia and the Pacific. The Convention is now the law of the land in all countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Countries from the Pacific Islands Forum have also been joining the OPCW in increasing numbers.
40. In Latin America and the Caribbean, my own region, we are also continuously active. One of the most positive achievements we have registered there in the last twelve months has been our increasingly close relationship with the Organization of American States (OAS) and in particular with its Committee on Hemispheric Security. This development and our other activities in the subregion have allowed us to focus on some Caribbean States that have yet to ratify. I am optimistic that in the near future, Latin America and the Caribbean will be fully covered by the Convention. That would be the logical corollary to the region's own long-standing commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
41. The work on universality is, however, far from complete. Our achievements are important, and we must take pride in them. Be that as it may, however, they must not lull us into the false belief that our world is virtually free from the scourge of chemical weapons.
42. The Middle East and the Korean Peninsula are still flashing red on our panels and we must continue and redouble our efforts aimed at incorporating as soon as possible the important countries in those regions that are still outside the Convention. I must say once again in this regard that we do not subscribe to the logic that accession to or ratification of the Convention in areas of the world beset with difficulties or wracked by tension must be forgotten or postponed until global solutions are reached.
43. No—the logic we subscribe to is precisely the opposite: By signing on to the chemical weapons ban, new States Parties will be sending a positive signal that may be seen as a building block in the effort to create a better and more comprehensive settlement of

the overarching political problems affecting them. In this spirit we shall continue working with the countries concerned and with other interested parties to bring these important nations into the ranks of the OPCW.

44. Under the relationship agreement with the UN I reported this year to the General Assembly and its First Committee. Our work with the UN, and in particular its Department for Disarmament Affairs, continues to develop and grow as we take mutual advantage of our respective capacities and specialisations to reinforce and sustain the family of coherent and convergent efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. May I in this regard pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the UN and recognise the presence of his Personal Representative, Ambassador Sergei Ordhonikidze, Director of the United Nations Office in Geneva, who will deliver a message on the Secretary-General's behalf.
45. Our outreach efforts are also a source of new opportunities and partnerships for the OPCW. In addition to our well-established links with the UN, the AU, and the OAS, we are celebrating the recent approval of the first ever Joint Action agreed to only last week by the European Union (EU) for the benefit of the programmes and activities of the Secretariat and the OPCW as a whole. This landmark decision by the EU opens the way to solid and ongoing cooperation between the EU and the OPCW. May I extend my gratitude in this regard to Mr Javier Solana, High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Council, for his political support, and to his Personal Representative for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Ms Annalisa Giannella, who is with us here today and who has been working hard for more than a year with our teams to achieve what we consider to be an outstanding expression of support from the EU for our work. May I also, through the Dutch Presidency and Ms Giannella, extend my gratitude to those representatives of the European Commission who also joined our efforts to bring this work to fruition.
46. Outreach and consultation have been key to another emerging issue in the agenda of the OPCW: the threat of chemical terrorism. I have kept the policy-making organs duly informed of the numerous exchanges we have established so far with various international organisations and with Member States that wish to see their mechanisms for prohibiting chemical weapons play an appropriate role in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and in line with current political realities. The adoption of resolution 1540 by the UN Security Council earlier this year has given renewed impetus to the efforts of the international community to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. We are in close contact with the Committee established by the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1540, as well as with the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, also set up by the Security Council, so that we can provide on request the technical information and advice that an organisation such as ours can contribute in the historic fight against the global threat posed by terrorism.
47. Before concluding my remarks on external relations, let me very briefly thank the government of Italy for hosting my recent and extremely useful visit to that country. Italy, one of the key supporters of the Convention, and home to one of the world's largest chemical industries, is an indispensable member of our community. I thus took no small satisfaction from Rome's renewed assurances of support for the work we do and from the desire it expressed to continue working closely with us.

48. Likewise, I am extremely grateful to the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for hosting my recent visit to that country. During it, I had every indication that we can continue to count on the United Kingdom's unwavering support for the Convention—a tireless commitment that is, indeed, a longstanding tradition with this original State Party. The United Kingdom is a world leader and a pioneer in all efforts aimed at curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Be it through its work here in The Hague, the unstinting support of the authorities in London, or the various forms of technical support we regularly get from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory in Porton Down, the United Kingdom's unflagging support for and confidence in the Secretariat are indispensable to our success.
49. I would also like to mention here that my first visit after this Session will be to Finland, another strong supporter of the Convention; and I wish to take this opportunity to thank the government of Finland for its gracious invitation.

OPCW Programme and Budget

50. As always, the regular Session of the Conference is the setting for final approval of the Draft Programme and Budget, which this year has been under consideration by delegations since May.
51. This year, an important structural element has been introduced with the stepwise incorporation of the results-based budgeting methodology. This has been done after an intense period of consultation, presentations by consultants, and following the example of other international organisations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency. The sheer scale of the effort made by the Secretariat at all levels has been impressive, and even though the Draft Programme and Budget before you can be regarded as transitional in terms of its form, it has the merit of being the first one to be submitted according to a method that will undoubtedly require significant adjustments and refinements in coming years.
52. The development of objectives and achievement indicators for the Organisation as a whole is another watershed in its still-nascent culture and traditions. Overall, we are confident that we are moving towards a system that will provide more and better-focused information and that will thus serve as an efficient tool in guiding us through our next year of work and programme delivery.
53. Much has been said on the contents of the Draft Budget. I would simply like to add that we have presented to Member States a proposal that offers a fair assessment of the resources needed to do our job. Responding to a request by the Council at its Thirty-Eighth Session, we have reviewed certain parameters such as current disbursement rates and recent decisions and proposals by the UN General Assembly on salary levels and related staff benefits; and we were able to present for your consideration a revision of the Draft Budget.
54. In it, the proposed size of the budget would represent an increase of 3.5% as against the 4.8% increase originally proposed by the Secretariat. I have thus responded in a meaningful way to the wish of some Member States to see significant reductions, and in so doing, I have also drawn the attention of delegations to the fact that the

adjustment reduces considerably the room for manoeuvre that may be needed to deal with such contingencies as late contributions, exchange-rate fluctuations, and—last but not least—the costs associated with the implementation of the tenure policy.

55. I must also emphasize that constraints on the size of the 2005 Programme and Budget are not the only important challenge we are facing. Equally serious is the long-standing question of the Working Capital Fund. Finally, a draft decision has been submitted separately to the Conference for its approval. If it is approved, it will increase the Fund and, with the corresponding amendments to the Financial Regulations, will also provide us with a truly effective tool with which to address possible contingencies.
56. You are also aware that in the past the OPCW has experienced financial difficulties because of unforeseen delays in chemical weapons destruction activity and in the payment of assessed contributions and reimbursements under Articles IV and V of the Convention. Although the situation has improved somewhat in the last year, there remain serious financial and budgetary problems that we need to resolve. As you may have seen from the Secretariat's monthly reports on income and expenditure, a very small sum was received under this Chapter in 2004. This is the reason behind the draft decision you will have before you at this Session on the late receipt of Article IV and V income and the Working Capital Fund. The aim here is to establish a more predictable situation through a stabilisation programme that will guard us against disruptions.
57. I would also like to touch upon the issue of payments of assessed contributions. While the rate at which the OPCW collects contributions is relatively high, the fact is that some Member States face difficulties in meeting their obligations because of internal financial constraints. I wish to assure those who are in such a position of my availability and my willingness to look into viable solutions that will allow them to settle any outstanding arrears whilst ensuring the observance of the relevant norms and at the same time encouraging timely payments in the future. In the coming weeks we will be consulting on this important issue with the Member States concerned.
58. I am confident that, with your goodwill and the political support Member States have amply demonstrated throughout the year, we will arrive at the solutions we collectively need to have an effective OPCW.
59. Lastly, I would like to say a few words about the implementation of the tenure policy of the OPCW, which this Conference adopted more than a year ago. As I indicated in my annual report to the Council, we have applied this policy in a smooth manner, bearing in mind the difficulties involved, and have started recruiting new personnel. It is expected that as part of this process, some of our directors will leave us over the coming year, having put in many years of service in the cause of chemical disarmament, in some cases since the days of the Preparatory Commission. I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to all of these and to thank them for all they have done to make the Secretariat what it is today.

Distinguished colleagues,

60. The Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties is underway, and we wish you the most fruitful and successful deliberations.

Thank you.

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