



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

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**POLITICAL DECLARATION OF THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION OF THE  
CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF  
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (FIRST REVIEW CONFERENCE)**

The States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (hereinafter “the Convention”), having convened in The Hague for the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Convention (hereinafter “the First Review Conference”), solemnly declare the following:

1. The States Parties reaffirm their commitment to achieving the object and purpose of the Convention, as set out in its Preamble and provisions. The Convention and its implementation contribute to enhancing international peace and security. Its full, universal and effective implementation will exclude completely, for the sake of all humankind, the possibility of the use of chemical weapons, which is prohibited by the Convention. Furthermore, the Convention mandates the elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles and chemical weapons production capacities by all States Parties, aims at chemical weapons non-proliferation and at confidence building among States Parties, establishes an international system for verification of compliance with its provisions, and provides for the fostering of international cooperation and assistance in the peaceful uses of chemistry.
2. The States Parties will continue to take account of developments in science and technology in the implementation of the Convention, in accordance with its provisions.
3. The States Parties reaffirm their commitment to comply with all their obligations under all the provisions of the Convention, and their commitment to implement them fully, effectively, and in a manner which is non-discriminatory and which further enhances confidence among the States Parties and between the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).
4. The States Parties note that universality of the Convention is fundamental to the achievement of its object and purpose. Much progress has been made since the entry into force of the Convention, to which there are now 151 States Parties. However, serious concerns exist that there remain States not Party to the Convention. The States Parties reaffirm, in particular, that achieving the goals of the Convention requires ratification or accession by those States that cause serious concern. The States Parties pledge to intensify their bilateral and multilateral efforts towards



universality of the Convention, and urge all States not Party to join the Convention without delay.

5. The States Parties, recognising the role of the United Nations (UN) in the global fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, stress that the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention is in itself an important contribution to this fight. Universality of the Convention, in conjunction with its full and effective implementation, helps to prevent access to chemical weapons by terrorists.
6. The States Parties reaffirm, in order to resolve any matter which may be raised relating to the object and purpose, or the implementation of the provisions, of the Convention, their undertaking to consult and cooperate, directly among themselves or through the OPCW, or by following other appropriate international procedures.
7. The States Parties, without prejudice to the right to request a challenge inspection, should, whenever possible, first make every effort to clarify and resolve any ambiguity or concern about compliance by exchanging information and by conducting consultations among themselves. The OPCW must ensure that requests for clarification and fact-finding, including requests for challenge inspections that meet the requirements of the Convention, can be dealt with expeditiously and effectively.
8. The States Parties reaffirm the obligation to destroy chemical weapons and to destroy or convert chemical weapons production facilities within the time limits provided for by the Convention. The possessor States Parties are fully committed to meeting their destruction obligations and the verification costs, as required by the Convention. There has been progress in chemical weapons disarmament. However, there have been difficulties in the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, and the Conference of the States Parties has taken action on delays in some States Parties and granted extensions of destruction time limits, as provided for by the Convention.
9. The States Parties welcome the cooperation afforded by many States Parties to assist some possessor States Parties in meeting their obligation to destroy their chemical weapons stockpiles, and invite States Parties that are willing and able to do so, upon request, to continue to cooperate in this field, using, as appropriate, relevant international mechanisms.
10. The States Parties reaffirm the obligation to destroy or otherwise dispose of old chemical weapons, in accordance with the Convention, and note the progress made in this regard. The States Parties, furthermore, attach importance to the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons and to the cooperation that has developed between the Territorial and Abandoning States Parties. Such cooperation would also be necessary for any abandoned chemical weapons discovered in the future.
11. The States Parties note that the OPCW has established an effective international verification system based on declarations and on-site inspections. This provides for the systematic verification of chemical weapons stockpiles and chemical weapons production facilities, including their destruction. Furthermore, it provides for the verification of activities not prohibited under the Convention that are of importance to its object and purpose. The effective application of the verification system builds

confidence in compliance with the Convention by States Parties. It also provides for challenge inspections as one of the mechanisms for the resolution of concerns about possible non-compliance, and for the investigation of allegations of the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons.

12. The States Parties stress that this verification system should be applied in a non-discriminatory, efficient, and cost-effective manner, and take into account relevant developments in science, technology and industry, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.
13. The States Parties underline the importance of, and their commitment to, a credible and effective verification regime related to chemical weapons and their destruction. The same applies to the destruction of chemical weapons production facilities, as well as to converted chemical weapons production facilities. They stress the importance of further assessing the verification regime applied to chemical weapons storage, production and destruction facilities, with a view to optimising verification measures, in accordance with the Convention.
14. The States Parties stress the importance of a credible verification regime related to the chemical industry and other facilities used for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, and of improving its effectiveness and efficiency, with a view to achieving the non-proliferation and confidence-building aims of the Convention, and to contributing to ensuring that toxic chemicals and their precursors are only developed, produced, otherwise acquired, retained, transferred or used for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. The States Parties also affirm the need to ensure adequate inspection frequency and intensity for each category of declared facilities under Article VI, taking into account, as relevant, all factors envisaged in the Convention, including, *inter alia*, risk to the object and purpose of the Convention, activities, characteristics and equitable geographical distribution.
15. The States Parties underline the importance of providing confidence in the implementation of the Convention by all States Parties, through submitting information to, and receiving information from, the OPCW, subject to the provisions of the Convention, including its Confidentiality Annex.
16. The States Parties stress that national implementation is one of the essential elements for the effective operation of the Convention. The States Parties will make every effort to overcome difficulties and delays in order to fully meet their obligation to adopt, in accordance with their respective constitutional processes, the necessary implementation measures, including penal legislation. They will cooperate with each other, through the OPCW or bilaterally, towards this objective and afford each other the appropriate legal assistance, upon request, to facilitate the adoption of national implementation measures, and will cooperate, as appropriate, to ensure the safety of people and to protect the environment.
17. The States Parties reaffirm that national implementation measures must reflect all relevant provisions of the Convention and the comprehensive nature of its prohibitions, to ensure that they apply to all toxic chemicals and precursors except where intended for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, as long as their types and quantities are consistent with such purposes.

18. The States Parties stress the very important nature of the Convention's provisions on assistance and protection against the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons. The States Parties will review and, where possible, further enhance the measures they have elected to provide assistance, with a view to ensuring an effective and timely response to any assistance request.
19. The States Parties reaffirm their undertaking to foster international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical activities of the States Parties. The States Parties stress the importance of international cooperation and its contribution to the promotion of the Convention as a whole. The States Parties invite the OPCW to further enhance its international cooperation programmes, and to develop partnerships with other relevant international and regional organisations. In this regard, each State Party is encouraged to take into account relevant developments in science, technology and industry for the common benefit, consistent with their applications for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.
20. The States Parties reaffirm their desire to promote free trade in chemicals as well as international cooperation and the exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, in order to enhance the economic and technological development of the States Parties. They also reaffirm their commitment to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and scientific and technical information relating to the development and application of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.
21. The States Parties reaffirm their commitment to implement the Convention in a manner which avoids hampering their economic and technological development for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. They further reaffirm their undertaking not to maintain among themselves any restrictions that are incompatible with the obligations undertaken under the Convention, which would restrict or impede trade and the development and promotion of scientific and technological knowledge in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes.
22. The States Parties pledge to further strengthen the OPCW in order to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention and to ensure the full and effective implementation of its provisions.
23. The First Review Conference expresses its appreciation to the international community, including the UN and other international and regional organisations, the chemical industry sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society, for their active cooperation with, and support for, the work of the OPCW to help fulfil the object and purpose of the Convention.