

**STATEMENT BY SINGAPORE AT THE  
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE  
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
7 – 18 APRIL 2008**

Mr Chairman

It is with great pleasure that I address this Second Review Conference to review the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Our congratulations to you and to the Chairman of the Open-Ended Working Group of the Second Review Conference, for undertaking the task of steering us towards the key discussion issues of this meeting. I pledge the full support of the Singapore delegation.

Singapore's Counter-proliferation Efforts

Singapore accords the highest priority to all efforts to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. We support international efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation and will continue to play our part towards achieving these goals. In line with our aim to maintain and enhance the security of global trade, Singapore strengthened our export controls regime on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, by adopting the full controls lists of the four multilateral export controls regimes.

## Objectives of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Review Conference

Mr Chairman,

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is a key convention in the effort to curb the illicit proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The important task before this Review Conference is to uphold the CWC in its entirety and to pledge our commitment to its implementation in all its aspects. As we gather for the Second Review Conference, let us build on the CWC's successes by ensuring its continued relevance in today's ever-changing circumstances. My delegation believes that a key issue which we should focus on at this Conference is the scientific and technological developments that have taken place since the First Review Conference.

## Universality

Mr Chairman

The OPCW has been making steady progress towards universality. Membership has risen from 151 Member States from the First Review Conference to the present tally of 183 Member States, with only 12 more States still to join the CWC. In order to completely eliminate chemical weapons, it is imperative to work towards full universality. Singapore strongly believes that we can only create an atmosphere of international trust, transparency and mutual responsibility if there is universal participation in the CWC. Therefore we urge States that have yet to ratify or accede to the

CWC, to do so without delay. It is incumbent on all of us to work towards the end-goal of the CWC - a world free of chemical weapons.

### Destruction of Chemical Weapons Stockpiles

Mr Chairman

The Convention's primary objective is to eliminate the threat posed by chemical weapons, beginning with the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles and production facilities. It is therefore crucial that all remaining possessor States Parties fulfil their obligations and destroy these stockpiles and facilities within the time limits established for each State Party. Thus far States Parties have destroyed over 35% of the initially declared Schedule 1 chemical weapons. Singapore applauds the efforts made thus far by all possessor States Parties and we hope that no effort would be spared to continue in the destruction of these stockpiles and facilities.

### Impact of Scientific and Industrial Developments on the Verification Regime

Mr Chairman

The CWC's verification regime, while already comprehensive, must continue to develop and adapt to changes and advances in science and technology. At the same time, it must also balance the considerations of legitimate business and trade in national implementation. One challenge the CWC faces is the developments in the area of chemistry and life sciences.

As discussed in the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) report, many new synthetic and production processes may lead to various ways to defeat the current verification regime. New chemical compounds are also being developed at an increased pace. Even as we review verification measures and equipment, Singapore believes that OPCW inspectors and National Authorities must also stay up-to-date with technological and industrial changes in synthesis, production and detection methods.

The chemical industry has also undergone change. Therefore, we too should reassess the emphasis and practice of the declaration and verification activities of the CWC. In particular, the declaration and verification of facilities producing Discrete Organic Chemicals need to be enhanced. On its part, Singapore continues to engage in outreach activities with the chemical and biological industries to ensure that there is industry compliance. We also welcome the changes in the site-selection methodology that were implemented on the 1st of January this year. It has resulted in greater equity and clarity on the CWC Verification Regime.

### Discrepancies in Declarations

Mr Chairman

Discrepancies in declarations on transfer data remain a chronic problem for State Parties. Singapore believes that it is possible to achieve compliance by standardising declaration practices within all Member States. We believe that this Review Conference is a chance for us to work towards this goal with respect to declarations made under Article VI. Singapore is of

the view that it is particularly important to seek an agreement on minimum declaration thresholds for transfers of scheduled chemicals as well as for the proper definitions for import, export and transshipment of scheduled chemicals.

### Singapore's Pledge of Assistance under Article X

Mr Chairman

My delegation and I are pleased to reiterate our continuing support for the work of the OPCW. In March 2008, Singapore updated its pledge of assistance to the OPCW under Article X. Singapore's chemical verification laboratory, the Defence Science Organisation (DSO) National Laboratory will be able to provide technical assistance in the form of facilities and services to support the verification regime of the CWC. DSO National Laboratories has also contributed specifications for data inclusion into the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD) to facilitate comprehensive chemical weapons analysis.

In addition, Singapore has recently pledged the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) 'Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents' Training Course. The course will cover classification and hazards posed by chemical weapons and comprises a broad syllabus of monitoring and detection concepts and equipment, decontamination concepts, sampling procedures, First Aid, Civilian Protection against chemical agents as well as casualty management.

Article X is a cornerstone of the CWC. We urge more States Parties who have the capabilities and expertise, to render assistance to other States Parties. Singapore calls upon the OPCW to continue developing the database of ‘National Programmes for Protective Purposes’ which will serve as a useful tool to organise and prepare for regional and sub-regional capabilities, should the need arise.

### Conclusion

Mr Chairman

State Parties must remain committed to the CWC if we are to achieve the ultimate goal of a world free of chemical weapons. We are faced with many challenges but I am confident that, under your leadership, and the commitment and goodwill of all States Parties, we will successfully map the way forward for the CWC at this Second Review Conference.

. . . . .