

**Introductory Remarks delivered by Deputy Director-General OPCW  
At the Briefing on outcome and next steps of the  
Workshop on Ethical Guidelines for the Practice of Chemistry  
under the Norms of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

**18 September 2015**

Good afternoon,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates, workshop participants,  
and Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to welcome you all to this briefing, where we will hear about the outcomes of the workshop on ethical guidelines for the practice of chemistry related to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As the Director-General noted yesterday, the need to promote peaceful uses of chemistry has never been greater. Global chemical disarmament has enjoyed remarkable success over the past two decades. But we must now buttress this success by preventing chemical weapons from re-emerging – in any form, under any circumstances.

The international community has voiced its serious concerns on mounting allegations of use of chemical weapons in Syria and Iraq – including by non-state actors. Such attacks remind us of the invidious dual-use challenges that come with any action to prevent chemical weapons development and use.

Over the past century, chemical weapons have often given science a bad name.

All of us are familiar with the case of a scientist, who saved tens of millions from starvation by creating a method for synthesizing ammonia and creating the modern fertilizer industry. Later this same Nobel Chemistry Prize laureate also applied his knowledge to masterminding his country's chemical weapons programme during World War I and, what is more, saw it as an obligation to do so.

What the Chemical Weapons Convention shares in common with the aims of this workshop is the obligation of science to work always in the cause of peace and security. It is to bring forth applications that serve to benefit

humankind, and never again to harm it. These applications should improve human health, agricultural yields, environmental management and consumer production in sustainable ways for future.

The OPCW understandably takes a very close interest in the work of this distinguished group of scientists and industrial chemistry practitioners to commit themselves to an awareness of the ethical dimensions of their work.

The Conference of the States Parties welcomed this initiative last December, and we will now learn of the fruits of its labour. I know that they are based on thorough research of past efforts in this area across the globe. Importantly also, I know that they speak to the realities that scientists and practitioners deal with, since it is scientists and practitioners who are driving this initiative.

Drilling down to the ethical foundations of these realities is what this initiative has been about from the outset, so that changing perspectives brought about by scientific advances are always tied to the constant of ethical and professional responsibility.

I understand that a number of the participants here with us today are involved in the Global Chemists Code of Ethics project. I hope that concepts relevant to the Chemical Weapons Convention discussed here in The Hague will also find their way into discussions on this project scheduled to take place in Dhaka later this year.

In all of this, we need to remember that any effort to develop ethical guidelines of this sort can only be endorsed in widespread practice. Nurturing a culture of responsible science will, I hope, be our common commitment as we move forward.

I wish to acknowledge here the impetus for this initiative provided by the German delegation to the OPCW, as well as the efforts of our former Scientific Advisory Board chair, Professor Suarez, in convening a series of workshop. With that, I would like to thank Professor Suarez and all the participants for their valuable contributions, and invite Professor Suarez to now brief us on their deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.