



OPCW

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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT ITS FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

1. I welcome you all to the Fifty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council, and warmly congratulate you, Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco Tonda, Permanent Representative of Mexico, on your appointment as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. You bring to this position a wealth of experience and well-known diplomatic skills that, I am sure, will be much needed during the deliberation of the sensitive and important issues facing this session of the Council. In wishing you every success I also pledge to you the full support of the Technical Secretariat.
2. I would also like once again to express my gratitude to the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Oksana Tomová of Slovakia, for her effective and dedicated stewardship of the Council. The tributes she received from Members of the Council at the end of her term testified both to the respect she had earned and to the successful discharge of her duties.

Chemical demilitarisation and verification

Mr Chairperson,

3. As at 30 June 2009, the aggregate amount of Category 1 chemical weapons destroyed by A State Party, Albania, India, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America stood at 31,904 metric tonnes, or 45.95%, of the total declared quantity of this category of chemical weapons. The amount of Category 2 chemical weapons destroyed by those States Parties and by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had reached 915 metric tonnes, or 51.84% of the total amount declared.
4. At that same cut-off date, that is to say 30 June 2009, the Russian Federation, which, in accordance with the relevant decision of the Conference, is expected to complete the destruction of 45% of its declared stockpile by 31 December 2009, had destroyed 13,013 metric tonnes of Category 1 chemical weapons, or 32.56% of the aggregate amount declared by that State Party. Currently, chemical weapons destruction is ongoing at three facilities in the Russian Federation, located at Maradykovsky,

* Reissued in English for technical reasons



Leonidovka, and Shchuchye, which has achieved full destruction capacity at its first operational building.

5. As I stated during the official opening ceremony of the Shchuchye facility on 29 May last, the commissioning of this chemical weapons destruction facility (CWDF) offers unmistakable evidence of the firm and commendable commitment of the Russian Federation to fulfilling its solemn obligations under the Convention within the treaty deadlines. The event also highlights the great contribution made by the international cooperation and assistance provided by Member States to the Russian destruction programme. Indeed, I praise the role played by the contributor States in the completion of the first destruction unit in Shchuchye, including, of course, the substantial help provided by the United States of America through the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, in which the Honorable United States Senator Richard Lugar has played a key role, as was recognised in the opening ceremony.
6. By 30 June, the Shchuchye facility had already destroyed more than 25% of the rocket warheads filled with sarin (GB) through the use of both processing lines in building 1A.
7. In the Maradykovsky facility, preparations are in progress for the second train of operations alongside the ongoing thermal treatment of the reaction mass and of the previously mutilated (by nose-thread welding) empty munitions bodies, which have already been reported as destroyed. The final engineering review of the new processing building, which is designated for the destruction of munitions filled with sarin (GB), viscous soman (GD), and Vx, was conducted at Maradykovsky between 2 and 5 June 2009. Based on this review and following bilateral meetings held in Moscow from 8 to 10 June, the verification plan and the facility agreement have been amended and modified, and are to be considered by the Council at the current session. Actual destruction will commence in the second half of this month.
8. In April, the Leonidovka CWDF began operations involving the thermal treatment of drained munitions bodies in the metal parts furnace and the incineration of the drained reaction mass. In accordance with the approved plan for verification and the facility agreement for this facility, chemical weapons are reported as destroyed once the residual content of the chemical agent in the drained reaction mass is confirmed to be less than 0.1% by weight and the corresponding drained munitions bodies have been thermally treated. The munitions bodies are mutilated by cutting.
9. Between 29 June and 3 July, the Secretariat carried out an initial visit to the Pochep CWDF in the Russian Federation. Activities on-site were aimed at allowing the initial-visit team to familiarise itself with the facility and the destruction technology to be used, as well as at the gathering of the necessary information for the development of a draft plan for verification and draft facility agreement. The Pochep facility has been designed and is currently being constructed to carry out destruction operations sequentially, with its units being brought into operation phase by phase.
10. With regard to progress made by the United States of America, I would like to note the resumption, since the last session of the Council, of the destruction operations at three CWDFs in the United States—the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility,

the Anniston Chemical Agent Destruction Facility, and the Dugway Proving Ground Explosive Destruction System.

11. As at 30 June 2009, the United States had destroyed 17,222 metric tonnes of Category 1 chemical weapons, or 62.02% of its declared stockpile. Four CWDFs in this State Party—at Tooele, Umatilla, Anniston, and Pine Bluff—are currently destroying mustard.
12. In addition, destruction operations are being carried out at Dugway Proving Ground Explosive Destruction System with the aim of destroying remaining chemical weapons items suspected of containing mustard and sarin. Upon completion of destruction activities, the Secretariat will prepare a final inspection report to certify that all chemical weapons designated for destruction at this facility have indeed been eliminated.

Mr Chairperson,

13. It is comforting to see that both the Russian Federation and the United States of America continue to make substantial progress in the destruction of their chemical stockpiles. At the same time, there remain only two years and nine months to reach the deadline under the Convention. Therefore, both States Parties must, as I am sure they agree, do everything within their means to continue and, where necessary, intensify and accelerate their efforts in that regard.
14. In this connection, as you will recall, Mr Chairperson, in pursuance of the Conference decision to that effect (C-11/DEC.20, dated 8 December 2006), between 31 May and 5 June I participated in the visit conducted by yourself and members of the Executive Council designated on a regional basis to two CWDFs in the United States of America. The visit to the Pueblo Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant and the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility took place as scheduled. As reflected in your report (EC-57/12, dated 10 July 2009), which I endorse, Mr Chairperson, the visit offered an important opportunity to witness the efforts made by the United States towards achieving the complete destruction of its chemical stockpile and, as the Council delegation noted, and I quote, “the United States was committed to complete the destruction of its chemical weapons, including in a safe and environmentally-friendly manner”. Moreover, the report calls on the United States “to continue taking all necessary measures to accelerate its destruction operations”.
15. I wish to add that, in a subsequent visit to Washington DC some ten days later, on 16 and 17 June, I had the opportunity to discuss these and other matters pertaining to the Convention with relevant authorities of the United States Government, including Mr Gary Samore, Senior Director for Counterproliferation Strategy at the White House; Congresswoman Ms Ellen Tauscher, who has since been appointed Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security; and the Assistant Secretaries of Defense Rebecca Hersman and Andrew Weber. I also met with officials of the State Department and of the United States Senate Foreign Relations and Appropriations Committees.
16. I particularly note and commend the firm assurances by the political authorities of the strong support of the United States of America for the Convention and for the OPCW,

as well as the commitment of the United States to fully implement its obligations under the Convention. This includes what I consider to be a clear determination to do everything possible in order to move forward the estimated date for completing the destruction of the entire stockpile. To this end, the crucial role played by the CWDFs at Pueblo, Colorado, and Blue Grass, Kentucky, which are still in different stages of construction, is widely recognised. There is no doubt in my mind that the United States will do its best to accelerate the work at those facilities. In that sense, I applaud the steps taken last week by the United States Senate Appropriations Committee in connection with the funding for the Pueblo CWDF, and look forward to the United States Congress approving the full amount requested by the Department of Defense for Pueblo and Blue Grass.

Mr Chairperson,

17. At the end of June, the Secretariat carried out a technical visit to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The representatives of the Secretariat were able to assess the progress made on the conversion of the former chemical weapons production facility and discuss necessary updates to the plan for conversion, as well as future chemical weapons destruction activities. In the latter context of chemical weapons destruction activities, we have taken note of the announcement yesterday by the distinguished representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya regarding the intention of this State Party to request an extension of the deadline for the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles, which, I believe, will be presented to the October Executive Council. While recognising the commitment of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the goals of the Convention and to meeting its obligations thereunder, I would like to underscore the importance of taking prompt action towards completing the destruction of the chemical weapons declared there.
18. At the last session of the Council, I also welcomed Iraq's accession to the Convention as a significant milestone in that country's contribution to international peace and security. Following that session, the Secretariat has processed and analysed Iraq's declarations and continues its work with Iraqi representatives with a view to due implementation of the Convention. I commend the forthcoming and cooperative attitude of the Iraqi authorities.
19. In this context, I wish to mention that the Iraqi authorities have carried out a visit to the Al-Muthanna and Falluja sites, where the declared chemical weapons are stored. This was the first such visit since 2003. Following the analysis of the results of this visit and at the request of the Iraqi authorities, we are now planning a meeting in Baghdad between a Secretariat team and the Iraqi National Authority, shortly after this session of the Council, and as soon as all preparations are finalised.
20. That meeting will be in itself of a preparatory nature, with a view to ensuring that all necessary provisions are in place by the time we carry out our initial verification visit to the storage facility, as per the Convention. I wish to reiterate the full readiness of the Secretariat to provide all possible assistance to Iraq as it undertakes the important task of fulfilling its obligations under the Convention.
21. On the subject of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China, the Secretariat continues to work with both Japan and China on a trilateral basis. The

latest round of discussions took place at the end of June. While no chemical weapons have been destroyed to date, work on the draft detailed plan for verification and the facility arrangements for the mobile destruction facilities is progressing, and I would like to thank both States—China and Japan—for their pragmatic approach. As I mentioned at the last session of the Council, it is our hope that these documents will be near completion by the end of this year, in time for the anticipated beginning of destruction operations scheduled for the first half of 2010. I also wish to recall that on 12 June, I paid a visit to the newly built warehouse in the Province of Guang Dong, which will store abandoned chemical weapons prior to their destruction. And that again is a good example of cooperation between Japan and China.

Mr Chairperson,

22. In a different area, let me mention that the Technical Secretariat will pay a visit to the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the coming weeks in response to a kind invitation from those States Parties in connection with the disposal of chemical munitions in Iraq in the period from 2003 to 2008.

Industry inspections

Mr Chairperson,

23. Let me now turn to Article VI inspections. Fifty inspections have been completed since the Fifty-Sixth Session of the Council, namely: three at Schedule 1 facilities, eleven at Schedule 2 plant sites, of which three included sampling and analysis, seven at Schedule 3 plant sites, and twenty-nine at other chemical production facilities, or OCPFs. Hence, we are continuing to make progress in the achievement of the non-proliferation purposes of the Convention.
24. I am also very pleased to announce that H.E. Mr José Artur Denot Medeiros, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the OPCW, has accepted the chairmanship of the workshop on OCPF-related matters to be held here in The Hague at the OPCW Headquarters on 25 and 26 November 2009. I am most grateful for this additional evidence of Brazil's and the Ambassador's personal support to the work of the OPCW. An invitation for this important event will be issued in the near future. I wish to recall that the workshop will be funded exclusively through voluntary contributions, for which the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has already pledged a significant amount of funds. I express my gratitude to the United Kingdom as well as to Canada, which has also pledged financial support.

Analysis of the selection of Schedule 3 facilities for inspection and adjustment of the rate of subsequent inspections

25. I would like to call the attention of the Members of the Council to the important matter of the selection of Schedule 3 facilities for inspections. The Secretariat has analysed emerging trends in this category for the coming three years. The results of this analysis are contained in a Note (S/772/2009, dated 17 June 2009). I invite the Members of the Council to consider this Note and look forward to their feedback.

Challenge inspections

Mr Chairperson,

26. The Secretariat continues to ensure that it has the ability to carry out a challenge inspection should it be requested to do so, in accordance with the Convention. In addition, it is now two years since we last held a challenge inspection field exercise with the participation of all Member States. Consequently, and in order to ensure that the Organisation as a whole retains an adequate degree of awareness and preparedness in this field, I wish to encourage States Parties to consider hosting a new exercise in the second half of 2010. States Parties and regional groups that have not previously hosted a challenge inspection exercise may in particular wish to take this proposal forward.

2008 Verification Implementation Report

27. Following the issuance of the 2008 Verification Implementation Report (VIR) in April, the Chairperson of the Council held informal consultations on the VIR on 24 June. A corrigendum has been issued, incorporating the comments received from Member States. I am pleased with the appreciation with which the 2008 VIR has been received by Member States.

Update on declarations

Mr Chairperson,

28. During the intersessional period, two States Parties, Cambodia and the Bahamas, have submitted their initial declarations. However, I must note that there still remain 12 States Parties that have not done so.
29. As I had announced in my address to the Council at its last session, a status report on the timely submission of declarations has been circulated for the Council's consideration (EC-57/DG.8, dated 11 June 2009). As at 19 June 2009, 76 States Parties had submitted an Annual Declaration of Past Activities for 2008.
30. In addition, the Secretariat has prepared and issued a separate Note on its experience with declarations submitted in electronic format (S/773/2009, dated 18 June 2009).
31. To date, 21 States Parties have submitted electronic declarations, 12 of which were prepared using the software tool called "Electronic Declarations for National Authorities" (EDNA) developed by the Secretariat. The first "User Group Forum" for EDNA was held on 27 May. The Secretariat is proceeding with the development of EDNA to cover Schedule 2 and 3 declarations and Aggregate National Data, and I am pleased to report that we have recorded a continuing and growing interest in the submission of declarations electronically, which can only be to the benefit of the Secretariat, States Parties, and ultimately the OPCW.

Launch of Scheduled Chemicals Database

32. I am also pleased to announce that, on 29 May, the Secretariat launched the Scheduled Chemicals Database on the OPCW website. The database was funded under the 2007 Joint Action of the European Union and is intended to support all interested parties, such as National Authorities, industry representatives, and customs officials in the identification of scheduled chemicals.

International cooperation and assistance

Mr Chairperson,

33. Concerning international cooperation and assistance, I wish to convey our appreciation to all those Member States that have in different ways contributed to making these important activities possible, through financial, logistical, and technical backing. Our deep gratitude goes to all of them. I wish in that context to note that the European Union, which generously supported the OPCW through its three Joint Actions, is now considering the approval of a fourth programme. When made effective, the 2009 European Union Council Decision will greatly enhance the Technical Secretariat's capacity in the areas of promoting the universality of the Convention, its national implementation, international cooperation, and the OPCW Programme for Africa. In addition, the programme will contribute to activities in the fields of verification and the work of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), as well as reinforcing the Convention's importance as a tool for promoting international security, including its potential in the field of counter-terrorism.

Assistance and protection

34. As regards the initiatives undertaken under Article X of the Convention, I wish to inform you that an invitation for the third OPCW exercise on the delivery of assistance (ASSISTEX III), to be held in Tunis, Tunisia, from 11 to 15 October 2010, has been issued (S/760/2009, dated 22 April 2009). Preparations are continuing apace in cooperation with the Tunisian authorities, to whom I want to convey our deep gratitude, and I look forward to broad participation by interested States Parties.
35. The Secretariat, together with the National Authority of Burkina Faso, conducted a practical training course for the States Parties of West Africa in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, from 27 April to 8 May.
36. The Fifth Regional Assistance-and-Protection course for Asian States Parties, which took place from 11 to 15 May in Seoul, was jointly organised by the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Secretariat. The aim of the course was to provide information on basic emergency response against chemical weapons and toxic chemicals.
37. Together with the government of Brazil, the Secretariat conducted the First Regional Assistance-and-Protection course on Chemical-Emergency Response, which took place in Brasilia, from 25 to 29 May. The course provided training in planning and building a support team in civilian defence for chemical emergencies, as well as risk

assessment and contingency plans in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents.

38. The Government of the Czech Republic and the Secretariat further organised an advanced training course on civil defence against chemical weapons, which was held in Lázně Bohdaneč, from 25 to 29 May. With the National Authority of Algeria, the Secretariat also organised a regional exercise on emergency response and an evaluation meeting in Algiers from 2 to 11 June. This is a project for the North African States Parties, which was carried out within the framework of the 2007 Joint Action of the European Union, with the main objective of establishing a regional emergency-response team.
39. Finally, the Secretariat organised two courses related to offers made under Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention—an assistance-and-protection training course jointly promoted with the Government of Serbia, in Kruševac, from 8 to 12 June, and a training course on protection against chemical weapons, organised together with the Government of Switzerland and held in Spiez from 22 to 26 June.

International cooperation

40. In the specific area of international cooperation for peaceful chemistry, also this year, the Analytical Skills Development Course was conducted successfully in Helsinki, Finland, by the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), from 29 May to 12 June.
41. The tenth edition of the Associate Programme will commence on 17 July. I commend the Governments of Belgium, Denmark, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, and Spain, which have offered industry attachments in their chemical industry.
42. Under the Internship Support Programme and in the framework of the Programme for Africa, the Government of China has generously offered two six-month internships in chemical engineering at the Beijing University of Technology, to commence in September.

Implementation support

43. During the period under review, the Secretariat has supported nine requests for implementation support by Member States. Technical-assistance visits have been carried out to Bhutan, Burundi, Cambodia, the Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Senegal, and Tanzania, with the aim of supporting a range of activities relating to the implementation of the Convention in those countries.
44. All activities proposed under the subproject 'Grants to National Authorities' under the 2007 European Union Joint Action have now been completed. I would like to extend my gratitude to the European Union for its crucial support in assisting the Member States in their implementation efforts.
45. The Secretariat also arranged two specialised regional workshops for customs authorities in Eastern Europe and Asia: the workshop for Eastern European States

Parties, held in Belarus from 6 to 8 May, and the workshop for Asian States Parties, held in Hong Kong from 10 to 12 June, which was also attended by a representative from Myanmar, a State not Party. We are grateful to the two organising governments for their support.

46. Both events have proven to be highly successful in sensitising an important stakeholder group to the key aspects of the Convention's export-control regime, with particular focus on relevant transfer and transshipment issues. I participated in the opening of the course held in Hong Kong and wish to extend again my recognition to the Central Government of China and to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for hosting this very important and successful event, which has contributed significantly to advancing a better understanding of the requirements and implications of the Convention in a key area of implementation.
47. During the reporting period, the Eighth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Eastern Europe took place in Sofia, Bulgaria, from 26 to 28 May. This important meeting, which I was also able to attend, provided the participants with the opportunity to exchange views, ideas, and best practices in implementation of the Convention. The Secretariat also arranged a workshop on Article VI declarations for Spanish-speaking States Parties, which was held in Madrid, Spain. The second regional basic course for National Authority personnel from Africa is presently taking place in South Africa.
48. A team from the Secretariat attended the 120th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union from 5 to 10 April in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The team's participation in the assembly was also utilised to reach out to African parliamentarians, as well as parliamentarians from some European donors and Member States which participated, including Norway and Sweden. The Technical Secretariat received a very positive response and the parliamentarians concerned agreed to follow up with their National Authorities on the drafting of their implementing legislation, and to support the legislation when it reaches parliament.
49. In June, the Director of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA) also contacted the Permanent Representatives of 10 States Parties based in Brussels to review the status of national implementation of the Convention and to assess their requests for technical-assistance visits. These States Parties were Barbados, Botswana, Chad, Haiti, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Paraguay, and Swaziland.
50. The OPCW Programme for Africa has continued to make progress. The ICA has outlined an ambitious programme for 2009, incorporating more than 30 assistance-and-protection, international-cooperation, and implementation-support activities, taking place this year at a total cost of EUR 740,452.00. Funding for the Programme has been derived from the OPCW regular budget, as well as from voluntary contributions from States Parties.
51. A donors' meeting for the Programme for Africa was held on 7 July 2009 at our Headquarters and it brought together States Parties to whom we are very grateful for their interest, and we look forward to their actual contributions. The results of the meeting were positive. However, a need for further support for the Programme

through voluntary contributions was highlighted at the meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to once again express my gratitude to those States Parties. The success of the Programme so far has relied—and will indeed continue to do so—upon assistance from States Parties, both financially and through in-kind contributions.

Implementation of Article VII

Mr Chairperson,

52. In the area of implementation of Article VII of the Convention, one further State Party, namely the Dominican Republic, has notified the Organisation of the designation of its National Authority. Thus, 180 States Parties have now met the requirement under paragraph 4 of Article VII. Following the entry into force of the Convention for the Bahamas, the number of States Parties that have yet to notify the Organisation of the designation or establishment of their National Authority has increased to eight.
53. Mexico recently informed the OPCW of the entry into force of its new implementing legislation, the text of which has been provided to the Secretariat. This brings the number of States Parties that have legislation covering all key areas to 85.
54. The intersessional consultations on Article VII are an important means of keeping States Parties informed about the efforts and activities of the Secretariat, and of seeking their further guidance. Mr Saïd Moussi of Algeria has ably facilitated these consultations in the past year. Before that, he also acted as the facilitator on universality. As he is leaving, I wish to thank him for his important contribution to advancing the goals of the Convention in these key areas, and I want also to wish him the very best in his future endeavours. I also welcome the new facilitator, Mr Rami Adwan, from the delegation of Lebanon. We appreciate his engagement, which I see as yet another clear demonstration of Lebanon's active support for the OPCW. It is encouraging to all of us to see that a Member State that is new to the Organisation is already so actively engaged in the Convention's implementation.

Universality and external relations

Mr Chairperson,

55. In the area of universality and following the important progress achieved in the past months, only seven States are left that have not yet taken the decision to reap the benefits of partnership in this key treaty.
56. In the Middle East, a team from the Secretariat, led by the Legal Adviser, has recently carried out a technical goodwill mission to Israel. I express my deep appreciation to Israel for the warm reception accorded to the team and for the very open and useful discussions relating to the implementation of the Convention. This technical goodwill mission represented an important step forward in our ongoing dialogue with this State not Party, and we hope that it will encourage Israel to ratify the Convention. I also wish to place on record my gratitude to the Ambassador of Israel and his team here in The Hague for having helped us in coordinating this very important visit.

57. In addition, Mr Chairperson, we look forward to Egypt, which has agreed in principle to receive a similar mission, and whose Embassy is also actively engaged with the Secretariat, informing us soon about the possible dates for the Secretariat's goodwill visit to Cairo. And, of course, we hope that the Government of Syria will revive its disposition to have constructive contacts with the OPCW.
58. In spite of our many contacts and the participation of Myanmar officials in OPCW workshops, the truth is that no substantive progress has occurred regarding the eventual ratification of the Convention by that country. Moreover, unfortunately, I have no further news to report concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The urgency in connection with North Korea's membership of the Convention is augmented by its ominous general behaviour on issues of non-proliferation and by the persistent concrete allegations about the deployment of chemical weapons there. In this connection too, I appeal to member States to do whatever they can to help both Myanmar and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to see that they should promptly join the Convention. The Technical Secretariat remains ready to support endeavours in this direction and we remain available to the authorities of both countries to help them to move forward towards accession to the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

59. It cannot be stated too often that the question of universality is of the essence and of the utmost significance to the ultimate success of the Convention. Universality has an impact not just on government membership, but also on the effective dismantling of networks for the trafficking of chemical weapons precursors. This is demonstrated for instance by the fact that, only last October, in the United States of America, a company from Illinois was fined for illegal exports in the period from 2003 to 2006 of a precursor of the blister agent nitrogen mustard, to what were then three non-Member States of the Chemical Weapons Convention.* Fortunately, since October, two of those countries have already joined the treaty.
60. Let me, therefore, assure you all that on the issue of universality, as indeed on all issues pertaining to the Convention, in the 12 months that remain of my mandate as Director General, I will continue relentlessly to work to advance the objectives of the Convention. With this in mind, as clearly stated by the Second Review Conference, the immediate and unconditional membership of the seven members of the United Nations that still are outside the Convention remains a high priority.

Mr Chairperson,

61. During the period under review, I paid an official visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to which government I wish to convey my deep congratulations for their commitment to the Convention, and my gratitude for their hospitality. On that occasion, I held fruitful discussions with Dr Haris Silajdzic, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Sven Alkalaj.

* Quoted from "Trafficking Networks for Chemical Weapons Precursors: Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s", by Jonathan Tucker. Occasional Paper No. 13, page 35. CNS James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies.

62. In addition, whilst in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I participated in the seminar on national implementation of non-proliferation obligations, which took place there on 22 and 23 June. I jointly opened the seminar with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Peter Mareš of the Czech Republic, which then held the presidency of the European Union. The seminar served as an instrument for fostering cooperation between governments, relevant international organisations, and civil society in the area of non-proliferation. I am sure that the results of this seminar will benefit not only Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also the Western Balkans region as a whole.
63. As regards other international meetings, at the end of April, I addressed the Twelfth World Congress on Public Health, held in Istanbul, Turkey. In May I was also pleased to address the annual International Chemical Weapons Demilitarisation Conference, which this year was held in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This is the primary international forum outside the OPCW for addressing scientific, technical, and other aspects of chemical weapons destruction. I encourage all States Parties that face the challenges of destroying chemical weapons stockpiles, including of old and abandoned chemical weapons, to participate in next year's conference, which is to be held in the Czech Republic in May.
64. Finally, on 18 June, at the invitation of its Chairman, I addressed the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee on the implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention of relevance to Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001). In my statement, I highlighted once again that within the clear boundaries of our treaty and mandate, and keeping in mind that the OPCW is not an anti-terrorism organisation, the OPCW contributes to the international community's efforts in the area of counter-terrorism by means of its efforts to ensure that the Convention is fully and effectively implemented.
65. I should note also that in the framework of enhancing our cooperation with the African Union (AU), I would like to recall the visit to Addis Ababa by the Director of ICA, which I mentioned earlier and which also helped in further identifying events that the OPCW could jointly organise with the Commission of the AU as part of the Programme for Africa, as well as possible areas in which the OPCW and the AU could collaborate within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in January 2006.

Mr Chairperson,

The OPCW's contribution to global antiterrorism efforts and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

66. Let me briefly return to the issue of counter-terrorism. I would like to express my special thanks to the outgoing facilitator of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Terrorism, Madame Annie-Claire Mari. For the last three years, she has effectively and efficiently led the working group. I am particularly grateful for the national paper, which Madame Mari referred to, circulated by France, which contains her own valuable conclusions upon finalisation of her facilitation, as well as her interesting proposals on how to further advance on this matter. I am sure Member States will look at this paper very carefully. I wish you, Madame Mari, all the best in your future endeavours, in Madrid most notably. I would also like to welcome the

new facilitator, Mr Mike Byers from Australia. He can count on the cooperation and dedication of the Secretariat.

Safety and security at chemical plants

Mr Chairperson,

67. With regard to the safety and security of chemical facilities, the Secretariat also participated in the “Asia-Pacific Seminar on Developments in Chemical Safety, Security and Chemical Counter-Terrorism” held in Canberra, Australia, from 10 to 12 June. The seminar explored developments in this area, with a focus on scientific, technical, and policy considerations, and was found very useful by the Secretariat.
68. I furthermore wish to acknowledge the financial contribution made by Saudi Arabia, which is intended to support activities on the issues of safety and security at chemical plants.

Administrative and financial matters

Mr Chairperson,

69. Turning now to administrative and financial issues, I am pleased to note that the External Auditor has again placed an unqualified audit opinion on the OPCW’s financial statements for the period ended 31 December 2008. The External Auditor will be presenting the audit report later in this session of the Council. We will carefully review and assess the findings and recommendations contained in his report, and appropriately implement these recommendations in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations.
70. As the External Auditor has now completed his mandate with the OPCW, I wish to express to him my deep appreciation, as well as to his team, for the continued support and advice they have provided over the past six years, enabling us further to improve our financial management, as well as general management of the OPCW. At the same time, I look forward to working with the incoming External Auditor, who took up his duties at the beginning of this month, and reassure him of the full support of the Secretariat in this important work.
71. On questions of substance, I must stress once again that our ability to meet our core objectives and produce the related outcomes in 2009 remains dependent on our receiving from Member States their contributions in full and on time. As at the end of May 2009, 62% of annual contributions had been collected for 2009, as against 63% by the same date last year. I of course encourage States Parties that have not yet done so, to ensure that their contributions are received by us at the earliest and in full.
72. In order to ensure the proper stewardship of OPCW cash resources in the context of the current financial crisis, the Secretariat’s Investment Committee has continued to meet on a fortnightly basis, to actively monitor the situation. This includes closely following changes in bank ratings, pursuing relationships with new, highly rated banks, and ending relationships with those banks whose ratings were downgraded.

73. At the Thirteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, I informed the Member States of my decision to introduce the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) at the OPCW for improved financial reporting on the delivery of core operations. This is aligned to most international organisations' commitment to implement IPSAS. As I had announced at the Fifty-Sixth Session of the Council, a report has been circulated, wherein the Technical Secretariat has defined its implementation strategy, established a broad timeline for a successful transition, and provided a high-level impact assessment for introducing IPSAS at the OPCW.

Draft Programme and Budget for 2010

Mr Chairperson,

74. I had the pleasure of presenting informally the Draft 2010 Programme and Budget to all of you last week. This document is on the Council's agenda for the current session. At this stage, however, I will make reference to some of the points I raised last week when introducing it.
75. The proposed budget for 2010, in the amount of EUR 74.5 million, reflects a zero nominal growth budget when compared to 2009. That would be, if approved by Member States, the fifth consecutive year in which the Organisation operates with a zero nominal growth budget.
76. Of the total resources for the 2010 Programme and Budget, Chapter One activities would receive 50.1% of the resources, while Chapter Two would receive 49.9% of these resources.
77. Within this framework, enhanced resources under the International Cooperation and Assistance Programme are envisaged, reflecting a 5.6% growth, or an increase of EUR 0.32 million, as compared to the 2009 Approved Budget. A substantial percentage of this increase would go to the Programme for Africa.
78. In terms of Article VI inspections, I have made a provision for a small increase in the number of inspections as compared to the 2009 Approved Budget. This increase bears in mind the fact that there is a series of discussions ongoing on this matter.
79. The general cost to Member States in annual contributions will be reduced by EUR 0.24 million, or 0.4%, when compared to 2009. This is good news, but of course I again urge you all to bear in mind that we need you all to pay your assessed contributions in full and on time.
80. I will provide a more detailed presentation on the Draft Programme and Budget later this week when we consider this agenda item.

Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

Mr Chairperson,

81. In response to the call for nominations to replace the departing members of the SAB, 26 States Parties have nominated 39 candidates, including seven female candidates. Four of these nominations came from States Parties of the African Group, nine from States Parties of the Asian Group, two from States Parties of the Eastern European Group, three from GRULAC States Parties, and eight from WEOG States Parties. The selection process is currently under way.

SAB Trust Fund

82. I would like to express my appreciation to the United States of America for its generous contribution to the Board's Trust Fund, which will allow me to convene an additional meeting in November 2009, as well as to continue the work of the temporary working group on sampling and analysis. I also wish to thank the European Union for its planned financial contribution to this meeting, later in the year. I further hope that Member States will continue to provide voluntary contributions to convene an additional session of the SAB in 2010.
83. Member States will recall that the Second Review Conference invited me to propose measures that would enhance the interaction between the SAB and the policy-making organs of the OPCW (paragraph 9.134 of RC-2/4, dated 18 April 2008). A paper enumerating such proposals has been drafted and will soon be issued.

The International Year of Chemistry

84. The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2011 as the International Year of Chemistry (IYC) (A/RES/63/209, dated 3 February 2009). The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), and its associated organisations and federations across the world, have been called upon to collaborate with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the preparations for the IYC. In the context of its cooperation with both the United Nations and IUPAC, the OPCW will of course make an appropriate contribution, underscoring the role of the Chemical Weapons Convention as fundamental to the use of chemistry exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

85. Before concluding, let me convey my gratitude for the support to the OPCW and my best wishes in their future endeavours to the several Permanent Representatives and delegates, including facilitators, who will be leaving The Hague very soon. I trust that they have found their experience with the Organisation fruitful and valuable. Equally, I warmly welcome the new arrivals and, whilst looking forward to their own personal contributions, I reassure them of the Technical Secretariat's readiness and happiness to support them.

86. Lastly, as head of the Technical Secretariat, I wish to pay tribute and place on record my deep gratitude to the Director of the Inspectorate, Mr Ichiro Akiyama, who will be leaving the OPCW and returning to Japan by the end of July. Mr Akiyama has served the OPCW with distinction, deep commitment, and dedicated effort. In the course of his tenure, he has gained the appreciation and esteem of his colleagues in the Secretariat and of Member States. I am personally indebted to him for his loyalty, his support, and his efficient work. I wish him a happy return home and all the very best in his future tasks.

Mr Chairperson,

87. You have in front of you a session that is rich in important issues, some of which are key for the present and for the future of the OPCW. I wish you all every success in your endeavours. Thank you very much.

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