

Amb. Vaidotas Verba, candidate of Lithuania for the post of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

I thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me the opportunity to present my vision for the leadership of the Technical Secretariat in time of growing challenges in front of our Organization.

Dear Colleagues, Permanent Representatives and Delegates. It is great to be here **again**, in The Hague, City of Peace and Justice, at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. I am proud, as former Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the OPCW, to be the member of the international community to support our Organization. The OPCW set an example how to act in concert and together to effectively implement profound desire for peace and for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. This mission has to continue through transparency, consensus and trust.

Use of chemical weapons in Syria brought massive casualties, economic and social losses and fear, at an unprecedented level in modern history. Recent reports of use and threat of use of chemical weapons in Syria continue to alert international community.

We live in the era of growing danger of chemical weapons and terrorism. The strengthening of an effective multilateral system of the prohibition of chemical weapons is a fundamental task that has to be made to reduce the chemical threat. We, the OPCW Members, the countries from outside the OPCW,

Technical Secretariat, and all the relevant audiences, including industry, civil society and academia, should join efforts to develop the OPCW as a global agency to reduce chemical threat and global instrument to prevent re-emergence of chemical weapons.

Let me present my vision for leadership of the Technical Secretariat through presenting new **opportunities for expanding scope of implementation of OPCW Core Objectives.**

Core Objective No 1: *elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles and chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) subject to verification measures provided for in the Convention:* OPCW should be able to deal with possible cases of new countries which join the OPCW. The OPCW should increase its effectiveness in dealing with the issue of chemical weapons in Syria.

Core Objective No 2: *non-proliferation of chemical weapons, through application of the verification and implementation measures provided for in the CWC which also serve to build confidence between States Parties.* The OPCW must be able to adapt to the changing realities of our world so that the verification and implementation regimes under the Convention can continue to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons, without in any way impeding developments in the chemical industry that are not prohibited under the

Convention. OPCW should assist in strengthening national controls of dual-use materials.

Core Objective No 3: *Assistance and protection against chemical weapons, their use or threat of use, in accordance with the provision of Article X.*

International assistance and protection programs should support building the national capacities of our States Parties to deal with the threats or actual incidents involving the use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals. The OPCW should explore further with the United Nations and other related international agencies, possibilities for cooperation in the provision of assistance.

Core Objective No 4: *Economic and technological development through international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by the Convention in accordance with the provisions of Art. XI.*

Globalization of the chemical industry marked by expansion of chemical facilities, increased trade and a spectacular rise in chemical production in developing countries, offers OPCW new possibilities to promote fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and scientific and technical information, for purposes not prohibited under the CWC, one of the basic benefits from joining the Convention.

A priority should be given to more efficient and effective implementation of Articles X and XI. The Articles X and XI should serve as important tools to attract the interest towards OPCW, to improve Convention's national implementation, and to increase the role of stakeholders such as the chemical industry, academic community and civil society.

In order to create a practical dimension for furthering Articles X and XI, the OPCW should expand its role as a platform for interaction and sharing best practices on new topics such as the fight against terrorism, efforts to globalize chemical safety and security safety and security at chemical plants, and increased role of stakeholders such as the chemical industry and non-governmental organisations to reduce chemical threat.

Core Objective No 5: Universal adherence to the Convention. Not joining the Chemical Weapons Convention is devoid of any justifications. Universality remains a leading path for confirming the rejection of chemical weapons by the whole international community. OPCW shall cooperate with Non-States Parties to join the Convention and promote world-wide implementation of its provisions.

Core Objective No 6: Full and effective implementation by States Parties of the provisions of Article VII of the Convention. OPCW should expand its role as a forum for furthering cooperation between the National Authorities, respective national agencies and the Technical Secretariat, on comprehensive

implementation of CWC provisions. This would allow for multifaceted and comprehensive approaches.

Core Objective 7: Full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention by the OPCW. Secretariat should improve reporting to the Executive Council on information about the national implementation, including verification activities, conducted by the Technical Secretariat. This reporting serves as an important confidence building measure.

The OPCW, by virtue of the Convention, functions as an independent, autonomous international organisation in the working relationship with the United Nations and other international agencies. The work of the OPCW should be more visible and become more important part – as world watchdog for chemical weapons prohibition – in broader efforts by the United Nations to make the multilateral security machinery more responsive.

We shall restore the role of the Executive Council as the main organ, as it is stated in the Convention, to deal with the problems of chemical weapons. Technical Secretariat, under my leadership, will increase the substantive support for Council and its working bodies.

Let me pay tribute to the OPCW Director-General and the Staff of the Technical Secretariat for efficient budget management and implementation of

the yearly OPCW program. This effective management has to be highlighted taking into account the financial and technical difficulties to deal with emergency issues like the chemical weapons in Syria. Therefore I would continue the established result based management process and practices.

Let me summarize my vision for the OPCW effective leadership. As the Director- General I will support collegial governance of the OPCW both within the Council and at the Secretariat. I will, as a priority:

- a. lead process of resolving the issue of chemical weapons in Syria, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the decision of the UN Security Council;
- b. lead the OPCW transformation towards the agency to prevent re-emergence of chemical weapons, and renew the OPCW agenda;
- c. Increase substantive support of the Technical Secretariat for Council and its working bodies, especially in front in incoming 4th Review Conference.
- d. Continue to accommodate the Secretariat structure and practices to meet the needs of Member States and changing OPCW agenda. One of the lessons learned from the crisis in Syria is a need to preserve expertise and institutional memory at the TS, especially in the verification areas.

Within the Secretariat I will implement my vision of the inclusive leadership which translate the position of the Director-General in simple phrase: more Director, than General.

Let me conclude Mr. Chairman by stressing that the nomination of the OPCW next Director-General shall be process of renewing consensus at the Council. I encourage all the candidates to support this consensus process.

I thank you Mr. Chairman