



ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

**THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
AND THE ROLE OF THE OPCW  
IN PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
FOR THE PEACEFUL USES OF CHEMISTRY**

Address by

**AMBASSADOR ROGELIO PFIRTER  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
OF THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

At the

**42<sup>nd</sup> IUPAC CONGRESS**

**Glasgow, United Kingdom**

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Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here in Glasgow to attend the 42<sup>nd</sup> IUPAC Congress and wish to convey my gratitude to the organisers for the opportunity to address this distinguished audience.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) attaches great significance to its participation in this important biennial event. As an organisation mandated to oversee the implementation of the comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, the OPCW is committed also to the allied objective of supporting activities in the area of the peaceful uses of chemistry as provided for under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

In these endeavours, we enjoy and seek to further strengthen cooperative relations with the global chemical industry as well as the scientific and academic communities. Over the years, the IUPAC has remained an essential and reliable partner. We have cooperated in a number of areas ranging from scientific events to joint projects on promoting professional responsibility and ethics relevant to research and development in chemistry.

I, therefore, welcome this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the OPCW to forging closer cooperation and collaboration with IUPAC and its associated organisations and federations across the world.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Congress will consider issues that are pertinent to the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I look forward to the results of your deliberations as they will indeed contribute towards pooling our energies, talents, and resources in promoting peaceful applications of chemistry for the benefit of humanity.

The prohibitions against chemical weapons are applicable to all countries, at all times and under all circumstances. Combined with its stringent verification regime, the Convention is indeed a landmark international treaty in the field of disarmament and international security.

The success of our mission and sustaining support for the Convention, however, require the support and cooperation not only of our States Parties but also the civil society. For it is the civil society institutions that play a significant role in shaping public opinion and promoting awareness of global responsibility.

Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The OPCW is indeed regarded as a success story. This is evident from the progress that has been achieved in all the core areas of our work. But we are aware that there are a number of challenges that we face both in terms of the disarmament effort as well as the evolving nature of the non-proliferation threat.

To date, OPCW inspectors have verified the destruction of over 46% of the declared total of 71,000 MT of chemical warfare agents and the inactivation of all declared production capability. In fact 94 % of all chemical weapons production facilities have either been destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes.

Three possessor States, Albania, India and another State Party that prefers anonymity, have already completely destroyed their entire stockpile of chemical weapons. Earlier this year, Iraq joined the CWC. Iraq's accession brings to an end a tragic chapter in the history of chemical weapons use. The former regime in Iraq used chemical weapons both against its own people and during the Iran-Iraq war. The present democratic government in Iraq is cooperating fully with the OPCW towards eliminating the last vestiges of the legacy of chemical weapons that it inherited from former times.

With over the half the declared stockpiles still intact, the challenge in the coming two and a half years is to ensure that, notwithstanding the highly complex and resource-demanding nature of the process, complete destruction of all chemical weapons stockpiles is completed with due regard to the legally mandated deadline of 12 April 2012.

Although chemical disarmament under strict international verification represents a crucial objective of the Convention, no less important is the complementary objective of ensuring the non-proliferation of chemical weapons.

Industry verification and monitoring global trade in relevant chemicals are the basic tools for ensuring non-proliferation. So far the OPCW has conducted over 1,600 industry inspections in more than 80 countries.

Our Member States are generally satisfied that the OPCW has an effective verification system that serves the Convention's non-proliferation and confidence building goals.

There are around 5000 facilities in the world that qualify for OPCW inspections. This creates a challenge for the Organisation because the frequency and focus of inspections needs to be adequate for a continuing assurance against non-proliferation. Discussions will continue in the policy making organs of the OPCW on such matters as the frequency of inspections of the different categories of facilities to be inspected as required under the Convention.

A related challenge arises from the fast pace of developments in the field of science as well as the global chemical industry. We need to ensure that in implementing the CWC's verification regime, it is kept abreast of advances in science and technology.

Together with disarmament and non-proliferation, international cooperation represents a crucial area of our work.

This is a subject of particular interest to many of our Member States whose economies are developing or in transition.

Contemporary security threats, including the possibility of the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors, have created a renewed interest in the ability of the OPCW to coordinate the delivery of emergency assistance to States Parties in case of an attack or the threat of an attack with chemical weapons. Our States Parties are also keen on building their national capacities to deal with the threats or actual incidents involving the use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals. We are working purposefully to strengthen this capacity.

In this area, the OPCW has made major contributions to strengthening the capacity of States Parties. This is done through training programmes covering detection, protection and decontamination. These trainings typically target first responders, hazardous materials specialists, government experts and emergency response units, and are designed to strengthen national and regional capabilities and emergency response systems. To date, approximately 2,300 participants have benefited from these activities, and support for them from States Parties has increased in recent years as a means to reduce the risk of terrorist attacks using chemical weapons.

While the Convention is not an anti-terrorism treaty, it has a definite contribution to make in this area. This is so both through its full implementation, as agreed by our Executive Council in September of 2001 after the terrorist attacks against the United States, and also in the context of the implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

This resolution imposes an obligation on all UN Member States to adopt a series of concrete legal and administrative measures to prevent non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. As regards chemical weapons, the requirements of resolution 1540 coincide with the obligations enshrined in the Convention.

With its extensive legal definitions and provisions for establishing a legal mechanism to prohibit and prevent unauthorised access to toxic chemicals by persons, groups and other entities, the Convention represents a necessary and effective complement to the provisions of the Council's resolution.

The adoption and full implementation of those legislative measures, helps not only to ensure compliance with the Convention but also provides the guarantees that any violators of the Convention can be prosecuted and punished, that declarable activities are reported, transfers of toxic chemicals and precursors are properly monitored, and that transfer prohibitions required under the Convention are effectively enforced.

In addition to the special attention paid to programmes relating to assistance and protection against chemical weapons, OPCW has a number of other important programmes to promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of chemistry.

International cooperation programmes range from sponsoring chemical research to providing legal assistance; from developing and improving laboratory capacity to specialised internships and training in CWC implementation and safe chemical management.

To date, approximately 3,000 participants from all over the world have benefited from international cooperation programmes.

The OPCW Associate and Internship Support programmes provide specialised training in modern industrial practices and skills development to chemists and engineers from States Parties whose economies are either developing or in transition.

One of our most sought after training opportunities is called the Associate Programme. It has been held successfully several times and the tenth edition is currently underway. The programme facilitates industry-related national implementation of the Convention and seeks to enhance national capacities in the peaceful uses of chemistry through improvements in the skills of qualified chemists and chemical engineers.

During the ten-week curriculum, they acquire a wider understanding of advanced industrial practices with an emphasis on chemical safety. The programme consists of both theoretical and practical training with attendance at educational institutions followed by industrial training at chemical plants.

Industrial internships and research projects also provide insights into best-practice methodology in the safe management of chemicals and in the implementation of the CWC.

The Secretariat also supports the exchange of scientific and technical information among States Parties to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry. A variety of research projects in developing countries are funded in part by the OPCW in the areas of environmentally sound technologies for the destruction of hazardous chemicals, analytical detection systems for toxic chemicals, safer alternatives to Scheduled chemicals, medical treatment for accidental exposure to hazardous chemicals, and practical applications for natural products in agriculture and medicine.

Within the structure of the Technical Secretariat, a Division called the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA), is dedicated to providing services to States Parties in the areas of international cooperation that I have just mentioned.

The Division has a regular annual budget of over five million euros. It plans and implements its programmes in cooperation with the Member States, many of whom contribute substantially through voluntary contributions, technical support as well as in kind contributions. An important financial contribution to these, as well as to other programme areas of the Secretariat, has been provided in the last four years by the European Union in the framework of its strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

In order to tailor our assistance programmes to the specific needs of the African continent, which faces particular challenges in the areas that are relevant to the implementation of the Convention, the Secretariat has, under my direction, developed, through consultations with the African regional Group of States Parties, a focused Programme for Africa. This Programme envisages an increased participation of African States in OPCW events. It also seeks to explore new and custom made programmes for enhancing the capacity of African States Parties in the implementation of the key provisions of the Convention.

Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

One of the key benefits of OPCW programmes relating to international cooperation is that they enable the Organisation to reach out to scientists, engineers and governmental representatives in developing countries and to spread the message about the underlying normative foundations of the CWC.

This is consistent with the work that we do in collaboration with the IUPAC which is motivated by the need to raise awareness within the scientific communities about the norms and principles of the CWC. By making such education widely available, the international community can ensure that the advances in life sciences will only create positive opportunities for progress and prosperity while at the same time erecting necessary ethical barriers against abuse.

The scope of the CWC is broad and comprehensive, and so is the work of the OPCW. So far, our endeavours have been generally successful, including as regards the broad support that the Convention and the OPCW have received from the international community at large. One measure of such support is the adherence of 188 countries to the Convention as States Parties that came about in record time compared to any other disarmament and non-proliferation treaty.

This support is vital to continue to promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention and its universal acceptance. Only seven States remain that have not yet joined this important treaty. Bringing them to accept the solemn obligations enshrined in the Convention and to reap the benefits of membership in the OPCW remains one of our priority objectives. The absence of even one of the members of the international community could indeed frustrate the noble ambition of

achieving a truly comprehensive ban on one of the most heinous means of destruction ever conceived.

Other important challenges remain ahead of us, including in the area of ensuring that all Member States have in place, in their national legal systems, the necessary legislation, regulations and other measures to ensure that the obligations provided for in the Convention can be effectively enforced vis-à-vis individuals, groups and other non-State actors. And this is of crucial importance in the contemporary era because of heightened concerns about chemical terrorism.

The ICA Division is also tasked with the responsibility to carry out in collaboration with our Legal Division, a systematic and needs-based implementation support programme to assist our Member States. Since 1997, over 7,000 individuals have benefited through participation in our programmes, training courses and workshops.

Such outreach activities have contributed to the endeavours of many States Parties in closing the gap between joining the Convention and implementing it more effectively.

Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentleman,

I wish to close by paying tribute to our Member States who have been the driving force behind the progress achieved by the OPCW by extending their full support and cooperation towards realising common objectives.

Indeed true multilateralism which has been the hallmark of our work, represents also the surest way forward for the common good of our global community.

Thank you for your attention.