

Remarks by the Director-General on the occasion of the unveiling of the monument sponsored by Iran

Excellency,

- I wish to commend your government for sponsoring this monument in dedication to the victims of chemical weapons. The tragedy that chemical weapons have brought to humanity can never be forgotten.
- I also wish to pay tribute to the architect Mr Taher Shaykh-ol-Hokamii whose artistic rendition of tragedy and sacrifice leading to hope and peace will serve as a constant and visible reminder of the purpose of these premises where we spend the better part of every working day.
- The tragedy of Sardasht is still fresh in our minds. Every year on 29 April, the OPCW observes a day dedicated to the memory of all victims of chemical weapons. And on 28 June we remember in particular the victims of Sardasht and convey to its authorities and its people our sympathies.
- Raising monuments to victims of such atrocities has a purpose. They recall to us the suffering endured by so many. They remind us of our responsibilities.
- This collective sense of responsibility to spare humanity from the horrors of chemical weapons is the essence of our work here at the OPCW. The CWC represents the collective will of the international

community to preclude forever the use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world.

- Much has been achieved towards that end. And much remains to be accomplished. *Even after the norm against chemical weapons has acquired such international legitimacy and authority, risks and threats of their use remain.*
- Our work to completely eliminate the declared stockpiles of chemical weapons from the world will remain a priority until the job is done. At the same time we need to reflect closely and work cooperatively to ensure that we have all the tools at our disposal to prevent their re-emergence in any form.
- We must continue to work tirelessly to convince each and every country to join the Convention in order to ensure full universality.
- The Chemical Weapons Convention represents the collective resolve of the international community to bring an end to a terrible legacy. Today in dedicating this monument, let us reinforce our commitment to both the letter and the spirit of the Convention and redouble our efforts for a world free from the threat of chemical weapons.