



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Eleventh Session
5 – 8 December 2006

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DECISION

VISITS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Conference of the States Parties,

Recalling that, pursuant to Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter the “Convention”), each State Party undertakes to destroy chemical weapons it owns or possesses in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;

Recalling also that, according to Article IV, paragraph 6 of the Convention each State Party shall destroy all chemical weapons specified in paragraph 1 of that Article pursuant to the Verification Annex to the Convention (hereinafter the “Verification Annex”) and in accordance with the agreed rate and sequence of destruction;

Bearing in mind the stipulations in Part IV (A), paragraph 26 of the Verification Annex that any extension shall be the minimum necessary, and that in no case shall the deadline for a State Party to complete its destruction of all chemical weapons be extended beyond 15 years after the entry into force of the Convention (29 April 2012);

Bearing in mind also the stipulation in the same paragraph that the Executive Council (hereinafter the “Council”) shall set conditions for the granting of the extension, including the specific verification measures deemed necessary, as well as specific actions to be taken by the State Party to overcome problems in its destruction programme;

Noting the progress already made in, and the present status of, the destruction of chemical weapons;

Also noting that States Parties have requested the extension of the deadline to complete the destruction of all their chemical weapons up to 15 years after entry into force of the Convention (29 April 2012) and the need to consider the progress and efforts to achieve complete destruction in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;

Taking into account the problems that States Parties face in the destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles;

Stressing the need for States Parties to take measures to overcome the problems in their chemical weapons destruction programmes;



Welcoming the proposal for visits by the Council Chairperson and representatives of Council members to Chemical Weapons Destruction Facilities and/or CWDF construction sites to further consider progress and efforts towards achieving complete destruction in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and any measures being taken to overcome possible problems in a destruction programme in accordance with Part IV (A), paragraph 26 of the Verification Annex;

Noting that such visits to consider progress and efforts to meet an extended deadline established in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, if offered voluntarily by a State Party possessing chemical weapons stockpiles, in the context of achieving complete destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, could be a useful additional transparency and confidence building measure;

Welcoming the understanding of both the United States and the Russian Federation that each will host such visits periodically, starting no later than 2008 and preferably with each relevant facility being visited at least once during the extension period; and

Bearing in mind the recommendations the Council has made on this matter at its Twenty-Sixth Meeting;

Hereby:

Agrees that such visits shall take place, as a means of addressing questions or concerns about a State Party's programme for fulfilling its obligations on chemical weapons destruction within its extended deadline;

Requests the Chairperson of the Council to work out with the State Party concerned the tentative arrangements for each specific visit (including the facility or facilities to be visited, timing, schedule, itinerary, composition of the visiting group, and safety requirements), and to consult the members of the Council on those arrangements before finalizing them;

Determines that the visits should be carried out without disruption to the destruction activities and with full observance of the destruction facilities' safety procedures;

Decides that the visiting groups should comprise: the Chairperson (or a Vice-Chairperson) of the Council; a representative from each of the other regional groups; one representative from other States Parties hosting such visits; the Director General of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") (or his representative); and, if necessary, a Secretariat interpreter;

Agrees that each visit should include discussions with senior representatives of relevant government authorities as identified by the State Party hosting the visit;

Decides that the Secretariat, by internally establishing efficiencies and priorities to the extent necessary, shall cover the costs of its own staff and the Chairperson (or a Vice-Chairperson) of the Council, and that all other participants shall meet their own costs;

Requests the Council Chairperson (or a Vice-Chairperson) to coordinate preparation by the group of their draft factual report on the particular visit, taking into account the aims of such visits;

Decides that the State Party hosting the visit shall have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft report, prior to its submission to the Council, and to attach to it any additional factual information for the Council's consideration;

Decides that the Council will consider the report of the visiting group at its next regular Session following the visit; and

Agrees that nothing in this decision shall in any way affect the obligation of possessor States Parties to destroy all of their Category 1 chemical weapons by the extended deadlines under the terms of the Convention.

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