

**Statement by Ambassador Pamela J. Deen, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka and the Head of the Sri Lanka Delegation to the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the CWC 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2006**

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to join the previous speakers in extending my heartiest congratulations on your election to the Chair of the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the State Parties. My delegation is confident that with your experience and able leadership, we will be able to bring the proceedings of the conference to a productive conclusion. Please be assured Mr. Chairman, the fullest cooperation of my delegation in carrying out the tasks of the Conference.

My delegation also wishes to express our gratitude to the out-going Chairman, His Excellency José Antonio Arróspide. His able guidance and skilful leadership paved the way for the successful conclusion of the 10<sup>th</sup> State Parties Conference. We also would like to extend a warm welcome to the newly elected bureau.

The performance of the Technical Secretariat is significant in achieving the goals of the Convention. We appreciate the efforts and guidance given to the Technical Secretariat by the Director-General Mr. Rogelio Pfirter. We also thank him for the comprehensive report presented on the activities of the OPCW.

Mr. Chairman, with the accession of Montenegro, 181 States Parties have now joined the Convention. Sri Lanka wishes to extend a warm welcome to those States Parties who joined the Convention since the 10<sup>th</sup> CSP. It is evident that we are drawing closer to the universality of the Convention. The efforts taken by the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat in promoting the Convention in this regard are commendable. My delegation urges the other remaining States, who have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so early, as adhering to the Convention contributes to international peace and security. It also strengthens the International efforts in preventing the proliferation of Chemical Weapons and denies the accessibility of such deadly weapons to non-State actors, including terrorists.

We are pleased to note the progress made under the Plan of Action adopted at the 10<sup>th</sup> CSP on the Implementation of the Article VII Obligations. The assistance received by the States Parties, in addition to the Workshops and Seminars organized by the Technical Secretariat have contributed to this progress. My delegation wishes to convey its appreciation to the States Parties who supported those programmes.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to the National Implementation Measures, my delegation is pleased to inform the Conference that the national legislation to give effect to the Chemical Weapons Convention has been finalized and the draft Bill is now before the Parliament for adoption. Provisions have also been included in the draft to have all users, manufacturers, importers and traders to register with the National Authority, in addition to obtaining permits for each import. Further measures have been taken to identify the import of scheduled chemicals and notify their arrival to the National Authority.

In May this year, with the assistance of the OPCW, Sri Lanka conducted an awareness course for the agencies involved with the implementation of the Convention, including the private sector. A further awareness course has been planned for the benefit of the industrial sector once the Bill has been adopted by the Parliament. In addition, at an inter-ministerial meeting held in September 2006, a decision has been taken to develop an emergency response plan for chemical emergencies.

Mr. Chairman, as a country affected by terrorism, Sri Lanka is very much concerned of the possibility of chemical weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. In this regard, Sri Lanka welcomes the adoption of the UN Security Council resolution 1540 and the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy at the UN General Assembly this year and requests the Conference to identify further measures to prevent the non-State actors from acquiring the chemical weapons capability. My delegation urges the Conference to take measures to build capacity in the OPCW

in order to ensure speedy and effective response in case a States Party requests for assistance in the event of an attack.

Mr. Chairman, It is our view that the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement is vital for the success of the organization as well as the participation of the Member States in the activities of the OPCW. My delegation therefore, requests the Conference to take necessary measures for the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement fully.

As the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention is getting closer, my delegation wishes to extend its fullest cooperation to the activities planned to celebrate this important milestone.

Mr. Chairman, last but not least Sri Lanka wishes to place on record its association with the Statement delivered by His Excellency Oscar De Los Reyes Ramos of Cuba on behalf of the NAM States Parties to the CWC and China.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.