

NIGERIAN STATEMENTS

TO THE

**CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES
5 – 8 DECEMBER, 2006**

DELIVERED BY

H. E. PROF. (MRS.) MARY N. LAR
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA
TO THE OPCW AND AMBASSADOR OF NIGERIA
TO THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF NETHERLANDS

Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellency,
The Director-General (OPCW),
Distinguished delegates,

Let me begin Mr. Chairman by congratulating you, on behalf of my country's delegation, on your election as Chairman of the Eleventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties. The Nigerian delegation is confident that your experience and skill on matters of disarmament will be brought to bear on this conference.

Permit me Mr. Chairman to commend your predecessor, Ambassador Jose Antonio Arrospeide of Peru for the very effective manner he steered the Organization during his tenure. It is our hope that the conference will continue to draw from his wealth of experience.

My country's delegation would also wish to acknowledge the candour, efficiency and dynamism with which the Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pferter has steered the work of the Technical Secretariat. We salute you and your team of technocrats.

Mr. Chairman, Nigeria fully subscribes to the statements delivered by the distinguished Ambassadors of

Cuba and Algeria on behalf of NAM and the African Group respectively. Nigeria, which is a non-possessor of Chemical Weapons, has stood firm in its commitment to the promotion of the provisions of the CWC, especially in Africa. We therefore take great satisfaction in the remarkable progress being made on the universality of the Convention. In this regard, we welcome all the new States Parties to the Convention, and appeal to those States that are not yet party to the CWC, especially those States in Africa, to join as soon as possible. We are convinced that it is the surest way of tackling the menace of weapons of mass destruction, particularly chemical weapons, in order to guaranty our collective security. In this connection, my country's delegation would wish to stress the importance of States Parties compliance with the provisions of the CWC particularly with the deadlines set by the policy-making organs of the OPCW on the destruction of existing chemical weapons by possessor States.

Mr. Chairman, Nigeria on her part, has continued to maintain transparency and a spirit of close collaboration and cooperation in its dealings with the OPCW, by providing all necessary information on its activities as required by the Organization. I am sure that many of the distinguished

delegates are aware of the initial inspection conducted by OPCW early this year on a declared plant site in Nigeria where a Schedule "2" Chemical TDG was being used. Although the company stopped production in 2004, it was able to provide overwhelming evidence to prove that the declared quantity of imported scheduled chemical was fully utilized. The OPCW Inspection Team did not find any indication of diversion of the chemical for any purposes not permitted by the CWC.

Mr. Chairman, the National Authority of Nigeria, in line with the demands of the OPCW, has continued to educate and sensitize the respective stakeholders and the general public on the CWC several Workshops and Seminars have been organized by us, while our Representatives have attended several courses/workshops under the auspices of the OPCW. All these efforts, no doubt, are aimed at strengthening our implementation strategy. Nigeria is also at the final stage in its efforts to fully domesticate the CWC, as the draft Bill on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is currently receiving the attention of the Nigerian National Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, Nigeria, and indeed the African Group, have continued to advocate the establishment of an OPCW

African Regional Office, in the firm conviction that such an office will be helpful to many African countries in overcoming the challenges confronting them in the implementation of the various provisions of CWC, such as Article VII. We also see such the proposed office as an effective mechanism to engage and work with the African Union and sub-regional organizations for the realization of the objectives of the CWC. The office will also help to ease the administrative bottleneck presently being experienced by the African Regional Authorities in their efforts to fully identify with the OPCW. In addition, the office will attend to the peculiar needs of the African States Parties and thereby maximize the benefits of the CWC in the region. Mr. Chairman, Nigeria is aware that an ad hoc open-ended Working Group is examining the administrative, legal and financial aspects of the proposal. We hope that the Conference of the States Parties will take concrete action to finalise the matter sooner than we expect.

Mr. Chairman, Nigeria will continue to ask for fair representation in the Technical Secretariat, without, however, compromising standards. We therefore insist on a recruitment process that will instill confidence among all the regions that constitute the organization. Nigeria will also

request adequate funding of the activities of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the Technical Secretariat in order to improve on its support efforts to the developing States in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Let give the assurance that Nigeria will continue to support the work of the Technical Secretariat in order to enable it achieve its objectives.

We also want to appreciate the unparalleled contributions of the outgoing Director, ICA Dr. Mukhabalo to the Technical Secretariat and to wish him well in his retirement. We declare our support for his successor, Her Excellency the Ambassador of Kenya to the Netherlands.

Mr. Chairman, it is with great pleasure that, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish the 11th Session of the Conference of the States Parties smooth, fulfilling and fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.