



**Eleventh Session of the Conference of States Parties to the
Chemical Weapons Convention**

Statement in the General Debate

By

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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

It is a great pleasure for me to extend to you, an experienced and able diplomat with a distinguished record of contribution to the work of the OPCW, my warm felicitations on your election as Chairman of the 11th Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. In your endeavours for the success of this Conference, please be assured of the full support and cooperation of the Pakistan delegation.

To your predecessor Ambassador José Antonio Arróspide of Peru, we owe much gratitude for the exemplary manner in which he guided the deliberations of the last Conference. On many difficult issues, his wisdom and sagacity led to outcomes that were beneficial to all concerned. As he leaves The Hague to take up his new responsibilities, we wish him good health and every success.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned delegations and China.

Mr. Chairman,

We approach the 10th anniversary of the Convention's entry into force with a sense of satisfaction and hope engendered by OPCW's record of accomplishments. The Organisation is a unique institution based on the only legal instrument that comprehensively bans an entire class of weapons of mass destruction under conditions of strict multilateral verification. This is in contrast with regimes governing other weapons of mass destruction.

While the Convention itself represents a unique accomplishment in historical terms, the 10 years of its operation has further enhanced its value. Here, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable services of Director General Rogelio Pfirter whose effective stewardship of the Technical Secretariat has earned our respect and admiration. In his important statement before the Conference he has ably highlighted both the achievements of the OPCW and the challenges it faces.

The foremost issue confronting this Conference is the issue of compliance with the provisions of the Convention relating to elimination of chemical weapons.

During the negotiations for the Chemical Weapons Convention enough care had been exercised to set a reasonable period for the destruction of chemical arsenals. The stockpiles of the two major possessors were the point of reference. The constraints and compulsions were duly taken into account in setting the various phases of destruction. Timely alignment of national priorities and effort should have enabled fulfilment of these obligations. The stockpiles of other significant possessors should also have been eliminated within this time period.

This session of the Conference is required to take decisions that will impinge on the viability of the Convention and the sanctity of its provisions. We appreciate the fact that destruction activity in one possessor state is gaining momentum and there has been a sincere effort to explain its compulsions by another. This should enable the Conference to take a fair and objective view.

However, conditions under which extension decisions are adopted must be spelt out unambiguously. More rigorous evaluation criteria must be put in place so that the situation can be closely monitored between now and the final destruction deadlines. Clear explanations of how the possessors intend to resolve matters should be integral to these decisions.

The Technical Secretariat's competence and objectivity must continue to be relied upon as an assurance that the obligations and commitments are being fulfilled. We do not favour measures that could provide a false sense of progress. However, our position on the proposal for State Party visits to evaluate destruction activity remains flexible provided this is not considered as a precedent to establish measures that do not find reflection in the Convention.

We emphasise the need for closer look at all such decisions and hope that the Conference will duly inject substantive assurances of compliance with the Convention's obligations by all possessor states.

Mr. Chairman,

The attention of the Conference has been drawn to the question of substantially increasing the number of annual inspections of OCPF plant sites, which will be effected through the Programme and Budget for the year 2007.

Pakistan considers the transparency and confidence building measures of the Convention integral to its credibility. It is in this spirit that we have accepted inspections of 1/3rd of our facilities that fall under the provisions of the Convention. We will continue to fulfil our obligations in good faith and in a spirit of strengthening the Convention.

We, however, share the view that the basis of OCPF inspections should be made equitable. Also discussions about the spread of inspections should take place independently of the financial negotiations so that prior understandings can become the basis of approving budgetary proposals. Increasing the number of inspections while proposals to redress the problems in the existing selection method remain still unresolved could lead to further distortions. There is also the need to uphold the principle that facilities of most concern to the object and purpose of the Convention must retain the priority attention for verification measures. We are prepared to work constructively to find a reasonable solution to the matter.

Mr. Chairman,

We support the recommendation made by the Executive Council in the context of the continuation of the Action Plan on Implementation of Article VII obligations. Pakistan will continue to support legitimate proposals that seek to enhance the implementation of the Convention around the world in a cooperative framework.

On 3rd November, a seminar was held in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad, for the chemical industry in Pakistan. Experts from the Technical Secretariat made presentations designed to enable the industry a better understanding of the Convention and of its responsibilities. Due to the quality of the presentations and the keen interest shown by participants, the event was successful and satisfying for both sides.

A day earlier, the Foreign Service Academy in Islamabad held a daylong module on the Chemical Weapons Convention which is part of the curriculum at the Academy. In addition to trainee diplomats from Pakistan, young diplomats from 24 countries benefited from lectures delivered by the Secretariat's team. The obligations of Article VII were suitably highlighted to the participants.

We thank the Director General for supporting the programme and hope that it can become an annual event.

Another important Action Plan concerns the Universality of the Convention. We can take satisfaction from the fact that the Chemical Weapons Convention has in a relatively short period of time attracted the adherence of nearly all the States in the world. It is our hope that the remaining few States will also join us soon. In this regard our appreciation goes to the Technical Secretariat and the Facilitator, Mr. Said Moussi from Algeria for their efforts towards attaining the goal of Universality of the Convention.

We would especially like to invite those that have reservations rooted in political considerations to consider the Convention on its own merits and the security advantages that the acceptance of the Convention would bring to their neighbourhood. At the same time, it is important to address the underlying causes impeding progress on universality and to consider positive incentives for States that are not Parties.

We would in particular emphasize the importance of the full implementation of Article XI of the Convention to promote beneficial exchanges and enhanced international cooperation in the field of peaceful chemical activities. We do indeed look forward to constructive deliberations on this matter which can lead to an action plan for the implementation of this important article. Similarly, in the context of Article X on Assistance and Protection we welcome the work that has been done and the substantive contribution that the OPCW is poised to make in this area. We, however, feel that the opportunities for participation in significant events such as major field exercises should be more widely available to all States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully endorses the recommendation of the Executive Council concerning the continuation of work related to the establishment of an OPCW Office in Africa. Our support for the African group stems from the convincing rationale behind their proposal and we hope that the on-going deliberations will conclude on a successful note.

A worthy son of Africa Mr. John Makhubalo will soon be leaving the Organization. I would like to place on record our deep appreciation for the excellent contribution that he has made as Head of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division in promoting the interests of all States Parties and especially the developing countries. We look forward to welcoming his successor Ambassador Mrs. Kalimi Mugambi Mworira of Kenya and wish her every success.

A senior member of the Secretariat who has joined us since the last CSP is Deputy Director General Ambassador John Freeman. I have no doubt that his rich diplomatic and managerial experience will strengthen the Secretariat in its mission.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the importance Pakistan attaches to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the work of the OPCW in ridding our planet of the scourge of chemical weapons. The decisions we take in this Conference will have a significant impact on the future of this body. We have in the past dealt with many challenges through goodwill and a spirit of consensus. My delegation will continue to work in a constructive and forward looking spirit to promote such consensus at this Conference.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
