



SECRETARIA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

M É X I C O

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF MEXICO TO THE ORGANISATION FOR
THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

XIII Conference of States Parties

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Mexico
Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco**

The Hague, December 2008

**SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR JORGE LOMÓNACO, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO, AT THE XIII SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF STATES PARTIES OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF
CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

The Hague, December 2nd, 2008

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to express my sincere congratulations on your election as President of this Thirteenth Conference of States Parties and assure you, as other heads of delegations that have preceded me, both my full support and personal collaboration, and that of my delegation. I am sure that your experience and vision will lead us to a successful conclusion of this Conference. At the same time, I wish to take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Abuelgasim Abdelwahid Sheik Idris, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sudan to the OPCW, for his effective conduction of the Twelve Conference of States Parties.

Of course, I wish to reiterate Mexico's recognition to the extraordinary work of our Director General, Amb. Rogelio Pfirter, at the helm of the OPCW.

Mr. Chairman,

Few months ago we engaged in an exhaustive and intensive journey of evaluation and prospective of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and of its implementation arm, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. As we appreciate today, the Second Review Conference initiated an exercise of reflection in which we are all still immerse, although the implementation of its decisions has already started. It did not result, therefore, in a conclusive, finite exercise; rather, it is part of a continuous process looking ahead at the future.

Indeed, the Second Review Conference sets the course and framework for the work of the OPCW for the next five years. However, we should not loose sight that, within this period, the total destruction of the chemical weapons arsenals worldwide must be completed; an accomplishment that would become a milestone for the OPCW's history in particular, and for a world free of chemical weapons in general. As long as their existence represents a risk for world's security and peace, the total and complete destruction of chemical weapons should no be perceived as a mean, but an end in itself, the fundamental reason for the Convention.

In this context, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate A State Party for the conclusion of the total destruction of its chemical stockpiles last July, becoming the second success story since the Convention entered into force. Furthermore, I wish to reiterate our call to possessor States Parties to continue, if not accelerate, their efforts to complete the destruction of their arsenals within the established deadlines. This would become an incentive for States Parties that do not possess chemical weapons to increase their efforts in implementing their own obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

Insiders and outsiders acknowledge OPCW's success. Success which stems from its efficacy and efficiency but, above all, from the fact that States Parties do not have major differences on the fundamentals. This does not happen frequently in the multilateral arena, even less so in the disarmament and non proliferation field.

Therefore, it is ironic that quite frequently we embark on what appear to be endless discussions about emphasis or inflexions. Discussions that, more often than should be desirable, distract us from attaining the core objectives, the ones which make the difference and on which we are all, essentially, in agreement.

Mr. Chairman,

As we all are aware, the international economic environment of today is very different from the one prevailing during the last Conference. The effects of the financial crisis have begun to be felt on the budgetary debates of the governments worldwide and, consequently, of the multilateral organizations to which we contribute as States Parties. Because of this, the budgetary discipline of the OPCW and its current proposal of zero-growth budget are a breath of fresh air.

Notwithstanding the above, it has taken us more than five months of negotiations to reach an agreement on the OPCW's program and budget for 2009. We have gone through difficult and tense moments but we are sure that, in the end, the OPCW's spirit will prevail. We wish to acknowledge those delegations that have yielded in their positions so the Organization at large can benefit. However, we were not able to avoid negotiations on the margins of the Conference. They will divert the attention from substantive issues and will decrease the quality of our deliberations. That's not good news for such a successful organization.

The reasons behind the disagreement merit a brief reflection. The center of the difference is a small proportion of the total budget and, in this delegation's opinion, a relative minor issue in the context of the big themes of the OPCW. I must be clear: Mexico respects the positions of those delegations to which an increase in inspections to Other Chemical Plants Facilities is cause of concern or genuine interest, but at the same time we take note that symbolic considerations, pride or mere tactics, have played a role too.

Either way, we recognize the link between the negotiations about the number of inspections and issues like the need to improve the verification regime, including site-selection methodology and enhancement of declarations. In other words, the role on non proliferation that the OPCW will play in the future and, in particular, once the complete and total destruction of the chemical weapons is concluded. In this regard, Mexico will continue to do its best so as to prevent polarization in the deliberations of the core issues of the OPCW and avoid repeating situations similar to what we are going through.

In this context, my delegation wishes to reiterate its disposition and will to solve the pending issues of this Conference. We trust we will reach a compromise that will allow our organization to continue to working properly and satisfactorily. To that goal,

Mexico will keep actively participating, and in a constructive manner, to bring positions closer on the proposal to increase inspections of OCPFs in order to achieve consensus and approve the budget before this Conference concludes.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to take a step back and return briefly to long term issues. Although the emphasis on what is “essential” in the Convention varies according to the interests and visions of each delegation, as it was demonstrated during the Second Review Conference, Mexico is convinced that all and each of us must comply with our obligations without conditions and, at the same time, respect and exercise the rights the Conference sets to each State Party.

The Convention is one and its different parts are interrelated. The fulfillment or not of one of its parts could affect the purposes of the Convention as a whole. Therefore, we can not condition the implementation of obligations in order to enjoy the benefits; this is a two way road and a conditional approach could easily backlash at any moment and eliminate the incentives to comply with the obligations.

To put it plainly, we can not put the implementation of Article VII obligations as a precondition to accede to international cooperation. It is necessary to keep the balance enshrined in the Convention: implementation of national obligations and international cooperation are complementary elements of the same equation,, designed not to exert pressure, but to generate incentives for developing nations, especially those which do not have chemical industry, let alone chemical weapons.

In this context, Mexico will continue supporting activities that will lead to the full implementation of Article XI as a way to consolidate mutual trust and to contribute to the economic and technological development of the less developed nations. In this context, we welcome the proposal to organize a workshop that will allow for the identification of specific actions. However, we consider that we should not get lost in the discussion of what we should be discussing; that is: we must agree on concrete measures in an agreed framework without going in circles and without further delay. Let us double our efforts in that direction.

Mr. Chairman,

It is evident that we are going to face many and important challenges in the next five years. To adequately face them we need less polarization and harmony in details similar to what we have on fundamentals. The agenda for this Conference is also considerable. Let me reiterate that my delegation will participate constructively in the works of this Conference to achieve an effective completion of the agenda and thus contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives of the Convention.

Thank you very much.