



Statement by Ambassador Selahattin Alpar
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to the OPCW

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STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
(The Thirteenth Conference of the States Parties, 2-5 December 2008,
The Hague)

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel privileged to represent Turkey at the Thirteenth Conference of the States Parties, with a view to reviewing the substantial progress achieved in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

At the outset, I would like to extend my Delegation's compliments to the Ambassador of, Japan, HE Minoru Shibuya for his election to the Chairmanship of the Thirteenth Conference of the States Parties. We are of the firm belief that Ambassador Shibuya's well respected diplomatic skills as well as the experience and dedication of the Director General of the OPCW Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter will help to ensure the success of this conference. They will have the full cooperation and support of the Turkish Delegation.

Our gratitude also goes to the Ambassador of Sudan, HE Abuelgasim Sheikh Idris who with great skills chaired the Twelfth Conference of the States Parties last year.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey has aligned herself with the EU Statement read by the Ambassador of France, HE Jean-François Blarel. Nevertheless, I would like to touch upon several issues which are, I believe, important for this body and at the same time of special interest to my country.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to start with the implementation of one of the core objectives of the CWC, namely the elimination of all chemical weapons and their production facilities with a view to achieving the ultimate goal of complete disarmament through strict and effective control of this process. In this connection, after Albania, "A State Party" deserves appreciation, as the second possessor State Party that completely eliminated its declared chemical weapons stockpile under the Chemical Weapons Convention. This is an important step towards reaching a chemical weapons free world. We believe that this achievement will contribute to the reduction of the threats to global security and promoting international peace.

We are confident that other possessor States will also make every effort to meet their obligations stemming from the Convention to achieve complete and irreversible destruction of their chemical weapons within the deadlines set by the Convention. In any case, final deadlines set by the Convention in order to complete

the destruction of the chemical weapons should not be exceeded. During the destruction process we expect that environmental, safety and financial aspects will also be taken into consideration by the possessor States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

Verification is another core objective of the Convention which provides for systematic on-site monitoring of the destruction of chemical weapons and production facilities. The verification regime also creates an opportunity to monitor the activities not prohibited under the Convention. Therefore, as we come closer to the deadline for the completion of the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, inspection of other chemical production facilities (OCPF) deserves a closer attention. We believe that the number of OCPF inspections should further be increased and the declarations of OCPFs should be submitted accurately and updated in a timely manner, in order to improve the efficiency of the verification regime. In this context, implementation of Verification Information System will enhance accuracy and efficiency of the work related to verification issues. Furthermore, we recognize the need to keep verification regime up-to-date in accordance with the developments in science and technology.

Mr. Chairman,

Universality of the Convention remains to be one of the challenges that we still need to deal with. We are pleased to note that after accession of the Republic of Congo and Guinea-Bissau in 2008, States Parties to the Convention have increased to a total of 184.

We should keep the momentum until all States become party to the Convention. In this connection, I would like to inform the Conference that Turkey will host the fourth regional workshop on the universality of the Convention in the Mediterranean Basin and in the Middle East Region, in Istanbul, on 16 and 17 April 2009. By taking this initiative, Turkey wishes to compliment efforts by the EU and the OPCW to promote the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We believe this workshop will contribute to the universality of the Convention.

Effective national implementation of the Article VII obligations is essential for the success of the Convention and plays an indispensable role for our common security. Turkey acknowledges the progress made on implementation of Article VII obligations, however it is obvious that there is much more work to be done and further efforts are required worldwide in this field.

Mr. Chairman,

Assistance and protection against chemical weapons continues to be an equally important topic. It is crucial to give an effective and timely response in case of use of chemical weapons. We support ongoing endeavors to achieve this goal.

Turkey attaches great importance to Article XI of the Convention which is economic and technological development. International cooperation in this field avails States Parties to develop capacities required to implement the Convention and use of chemicals for peaceful purposes. In this context, we support the initiative to convene a workshop in 2009 on exploring concrete measures to improve the implementation of Article XI of the CWC.

Yet, another important issue is industry cluster activities. We welcome the appointment of facilitators on the topics of “Enhancement of OCPF Declarations” and “Low Concentration of Schedule 2 (2A and 2A*) Chemicals” and initiation of consultations on these issues. We also expect that consultations on the other outstanding issues under the industry cluster will commence soon.

It gives me pleasure that Turkey will also host a sub-regional seminar on chemical industry related issues for States Parties in the Mediterranean Basin in fall 2009, in Istanbul. We expect that this event will help better implementation of Article VI of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to touch particularly on terrorism which is a real threat especially to Turkey and many other States who have encountered terrorist attacks. The Convention has capability and tools to fight against chemical terrorism. In this context, we recall the decision of the Council (EC-XXVII/DEC.5, dated 7 December 2001) related to the OPCW’s contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts, which is still relevant today. This decision emphasizes that the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention constitutes a contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts. The decision focuses on universality, national implementation, destruction of chemical weapons, activities not prohibited by the Convention, as well as assistance and protection.

I also would like to emphasize the importance of the cooperation among the OPCW, States Parties and international organizations. We believe that the UN Security Council resolution 1540 and the UN “Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”, re-adopted by the General Assembly on September 5th, 2008 will enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. The strategy encourages the OPCW to continue its efforts, within its respective mandate, in helping States to build a capacity to prevent terrorists from accessing chemical materials, to ensure security at related facilities, and to respond effectively in case of an attack using such materials.

Mr. Chairman,

This year the Second Review Conference was held in April 2008 to review the operation of the Convention during the last five years. This meeting provided a

special opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the CWC in this period and determine the challenges to overcome in the following term. At the end of the Second Review Conference, the States Parties reaffirmed their firm commitments to reaching the goals and objectives of the CWC and adopted a report which sheds light on the needs of effective, robust and timely implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Second Review Conference gave us yet another possibility to emphasize and demonstrate the importance of the Convention and its contribution to promoting international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

My country is proud to fulfill its national implementation obligations as well as other obligations deriving from the Convention. Considering global arms control and disarmament as a major aspect of its foreign policy, my Government supports complete disarmament efforts worldwide. Turkey reaffirms its commitment to the goals of the Convention. In this vein, Turkey, in coordination with the Technical Secretariat, will do its utmost to the successful implementation of the universality workshop and industry seminar, as I mentioned before both will be held in Istanbul, in 2009.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not least, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have invested their time and energy for creating a world, free of chemical weapons. In that respect, I wish to express my appreciation once again for the diligent work conducted by the Technical Secretariat under the able and wise supervision of the Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter.

Mr. Chairman,

The Turkish Delegation looks forward to working with you and with the Secretariat constructively in the coming days and pledges its full support for the successful completion of the Conference.

Thank you.