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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
AT ITS FOURTEENTH SESSION**

Mr Chairperson,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,

1. I welcome you all to the Fourteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.
2. The Conference has elected as its Chairperson a talented diplomat of recognised skills and abilities, with a deep understanding of the Chemical Weapons Convention and of the work of the OPCW. I warmly congratulate you, Ambassador Vaidotas Verba, on your election. I wish you well in your particularly important mission, and assure you, of course, of the full support of the Technical Secretariat in this endeavour.
3. I also wish to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Minoru Shibuya of Japan, for his contribution to preserving the constructive spirit of cooperation that marks our work, also by handling a difficult session of the Conference last year with great wisdom and patience. In doing so, he has earned the admiration and gratitude of us all.
4. I express my deep appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr Ban Ki-moon, who has addressed an important message to the Conference, which will be read out after my statement by the Director of External Relations, Mr Zhixian Liu. In my meeting with the Secretary-General last October, he reaffirmed his strong support for the work of the OPCW, which he described as exemplary. I am also extremely grateful to him for his very kind words directed towards the Technical Secretariat and to myself. The annual resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the OPCW, so effectively piloted by Poland, is yet another manifestation of the strong international consensus in favour of our treaty and this Organisation.
5. The addition of four new members to the OPCW family reconfirms the resounding endorsement of the noble goals and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I warmly welcome the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Iraq, and Lebanon as the newest members of the OPCW. In fact, our Organisation has continued on its path of progress in all areas within its mandate. Allow me now to present my report to the Conference, beginning with chemical demilitarisation and verification.



Chemical demilitarisation and verification

6. In the period since the last session of the Conference, States Parties with declared chemical weapons stockpiles have continued to make significant progress with respect to their destruction obligations. The measures undertaken by possessor States to advance and accelerate destruction operations have shown substantial results, notwithstanding the significant technical and financial challenges that the destruction process involves.
7. Naturally, the short period of two years and four months remaining until 29 April 2012 has encouraged ever-greater focus in the progress made by possessor States. This is particularly so in the light of the complex challenges posed by the destruction of the largest stockpiles and the acknowledgement—the unquestionable commitment to the Convention by the governments concerned notwithstanding—that the deadline under the Convention might not be achievable for all countries. In this context, I would like to draw your attention to the recent prudent decision of the Executive Council, in pursuance of an initiative by Brazil, to request the Chairperson of the Council “to engage in informal consultations with interested delegations on how and when to initiate discussion by the Council on issues related to meeting the final extended deadlines for the destruction of chemical weapons and to keep the Council informed of these consultations” (report of the Fifty-Eighth Session of the Council, EC-58/9, dated 16 October 2009).
8. On the facts and figures, let me report the following. As at 31 October 2009, the aggregate amount of Category 1 chemical weapons destroyed by A State Party, Albania, India, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America was 37,581 metric tonnes (MTs), or approximately 54.13% of the declared quantity of this category of chemical weapons. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has yet to commence destroying its Category 1 chemical weapons, but we look forward to that starting soon.
9. India became, on 16 March 2009, the third State Party, after Albania and A State Party, to complete the destruction of all its chemical weapons stockpiles. I have commended India, and I do so again today, for the exemplary commitment it has shown to fulfilling its obligations under the Convention, and I think it deserves the recognition of us all.
10. With respect to Category 2 chemical weapons, 915.575 MTs, or 51.84% of the total amount declared have already been destroyed to date, an amount that has increased slightly compared to last year, following the unplanned destruction of recovered Category 2 munitions in the United States of America. Albania, India, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America have all completed the destruction of their Category 2 chemical weapons, whereas the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has destroyed 39% of the amount it had declared. There has been no change with respect to Category 3 chemical weapons: all States Parties that had declared Category 3 chemical weapons have completed the destruction of these weapons.
11. In the past year, India, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America, all of which have been granted extensions for completing the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapons, continued to fulfil their

reporting obligations and presented, in timely fashion, their fourth and fifth reports. The Secretariat was able to reconcile the data that it had collected during on-site inspections with the information provided by the possessor States.

12. Following a phase-by-phase approach with respect to the construction and commissioning of its chemical weapons destruction facilities (CWDFs) based on munitions types and chemical fill, with a gradual increase of the overall destruction capacity, the Russian Federation has increased its efforts with a view to finalising construction and commencing chemical weapons destruction operations at new facilities and at new units at facilities that are already operational.
13. Thus, after having successfully completed destruction activities at the Gorny and Kambarka CWDFs, in 2009 destruction operations were launched at Shchuchye and at the new units at Maradykovsky and Leonidovka. At the same time, as reported by the Russian Federation, preparations are proceeding to launch two further chemical weapons destruction facilities at Kizner and Pochep. The Secretariat conducted an initial visit to the latter in June 2009.
14. This determined effort on the part of the Russian Federation has produced excellent results. Indeed, our inspection teams have reported that, as at midnight on 25 November 2009, the Russian Federation had destroyed 18,000.218 metric tonnes, or 45.04% of its declared Category 1 chemical weapons. The Russian Federation has, therefore, met its Phase 3 extended deadline and has done so over a month ahead of schedule. I congratulate the Russian Federation for having achieved this key destruction milestone and encourage this State Party to persevere in its determination and concrete efforts to achieve the complete destruction of its entire chemical weapons stockpile within the extended deadline.
15. On its part, the United States of America has destroyed, as at 31 October 2009, 18,516 MTs of Category 1 chemical weapons, or equivalent to 66.68% of its declared stockpile.
16. By completing destruction operations in relation to the neutralisation of GB in three leaking one-ton containers at Blue Grass, Kentucky, and the subsequent disposal of the resulting neutralent at Veolia, the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility accomplished the destruction of all its chemical-warfare agents designated for destruction in March 2009. As a result, four CWDFs in the United States of America have completed operations, namely Aberdeen, Johnston Atoll, Newport, and Pine Bluff Binary. In addition, two small-scale CWDFs—namely the Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System facility and the Dugway Proving Ground Explosive Destruction System facility—have also completed operations.
17. Four other destruction facilities in the United States of America—at Anniston, Pine Bluff, Tooele, and Umatilla—have been operating in 2009 and are conducting the final agent campaigns, namely the destruction of mustard. Additionally, small-scale destruction operations have taken place in the United States as required, in support of chemical weapons recovery and remediation activities.
18. In accordance with the decision by the Conference at its Eleventh Session (C-11/DEC.20, dated 8 December 2006), visits have been conducted by the

Chairperson, members of the OPCW Executive Council, and myself to chemical weapons destruction facilities in those States Parties that have obtained extensions beyond the original 10-year destruction deadline. The visits, as we all know, seek to “consider progress and efforts towards achieving complete destruction in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and any measures being taken to overcome possible problems in a destruction programme”. Accordingly, such visits have taken place to the United States of America and to the Russian Federation, in 2007 and 2008 respectively. This year the United States hosted a third visit between 31 May and 5 June 2009, and this was for two facilities, located, respectively, at Pueblo, Colorado, and Umatilla, Oregon. This visit offered a unique opportunity to witness first hand the efforts made by the United States towards achieving the complete destruction of its chemical weapons stockpile, and reconfirmed the United States’ dedication to meeting its obligations under the Convention.

19. Indeed, the United States has been successful in its efforts to improve the rate of destruction and, as reported by the United States officials, in spite of various challenges, all presently operating facilities are on track to complete the destruction of their stockpiles before April 2012. However, at this stage, the United States’ estimates still take the completion of destruction beyond 2012. While commending the sustained and firm commitment of the United States to the complete destruction of its chemical weapons, as well as the allocation of substantial financial resources to this process and the great progress made in building the Pueblo and Blue Grass CWDFs, I encourage the United States to continue taking all necessary measures to accelerate the construction schedule of those facilities, so that the elimination of its stockpile can be completed at the earliest possible date.
20. Turning now to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, I would like to underscore that, in spite of the fact that this State Party has faced a number of difficulties in the context of preparations for the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles, the reloading of mustard and two chemical weapons precursors at the Ruwagha Chemical Reloading System commenced on 31 March 2009 and was completed by the end of April 2009.
21. Nevertheless, the difficulties that have arisen and the delays that have been caused by implementing the necessary measures to alleviate and overcome such difficulties would prevent this State Party from meeting the intermediate and final deadlines for the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons stockpile, as established by the Conference at its Eleventh Session. As a result, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya submitted a request for extension of the intermediate as well as the final deadlines for the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons stockpile and proposed new deadlines which are now before the Conference for its consideration.
22. Having considered the information provided by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which outlined the nature of the difficulties encountered and the steps taken to deal with the situation that had arisen, and also gave an update of the status of the national destruction programme, the Council recommended that the Conference at this session amend its decision and grant an extension of the deadline by which the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya must destroy all of its Category 1 chemical weapons stockpiles. That amendment would take the date to 15 May 2011, as well as establishing new intermediate deadlines for the destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

23. One important development in the course of 2009 relates to the fact that the number of States Parties that have declared the possession of chemical weapons or of former chemical weapons production capabilities has increased by one. This is the result of Iraq's accession to the Convention on 12 February 2009 and its subsequent submission of its initial declaration. By acceding to the Convention, Iraq has solemnly reconfirmed its determination to forswear a painful legacy of the former regime and to contribute to international peace and security.
24. The Secretariat has processed and analysed Iraq's declarations and has continued its work with Iraqi representatives with a view to clarifying certain issues and receiving specific information for the planning of an initial inspection. I should mention that exceptional safety considerations have impeded Iraq's ability to comply in timely fashion with the requirement set forth in subparagraph 1(a)(ii) of Article III of the Convention. In this regard, the Secretariat and the Iraqi authorities have planned a technical assistance visit by the Secretariat in order to address the matter and to further specify the initial declaration, as well as the conditions necessary for the Secretariat to carry out its initial inspection. For security-related reasons and upon the recommendation of the Iraqi authorities, the meeting has not yet come to fruition. In any circumstance, the Secretariat remains prepared to conduct such a visit at the earliest opportunity, at a date and venue to be proposed by Iraq. I want to deeply thank Iraq for its commitment and support to the Secretariat in order for this visit to be carried out. I wish to reiterate once again the full readiness of the Technical Secretariat to provide all possible assistance to Iraq as it undertakes the important task of fulfilling its obligations under the Convention.

Chemical weapons production facilities

25. Out of 70 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by 13 States Parties, 43 have already been destroyed and 19 have been converted for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. As a result, the chemical weapons production capacity has been completely eliminated for 88.6% of all declared CWPFs. Ten States Parties have completed the destruction or conversion of all their declared CWPFs. All converted production facilities remain under systematic verification by the OPCW to ensure that they are fully consistent with the approved conversion requests.
26. After its accession to the Convention, Iraq declared five CWPFs; for one of those facilities, Iraq has submitted a conversion request. One CWPF in the Russian Federation and two CWPFs in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya have still to complete their conversion for purposes not prohibited.
27. One issue which remains under consideration by the Council relates to the "nature of continued verification measures" for converted CWPFs upon completion of the 10-year period after the Director-General had certified conversion. Currently, four converted CWPFs in two States Parties have passed this 10-year threshold. Next year, three more facilities in three States Parties will acquire this status, which will bring the number of converted CWPFs for which a decision on future verification is still pending to a total of seven. That is why a decision by the Council on this issue is very important for the future verification regime under the Convention.

28. I would also like to mention at this juncture that, at the invitation of the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Secretariat paid a visit to these countries in the first week of September, in connection with the disposal of chemical munitions in Iraq in the period between 2003 and 2008. The Secretariat extensively reviewed the documentation related to Iraqi chemical munitions recovered and destroyed by the armed forces of the United Kingdom and the United States in the aforementioned period.
29. In both cases, the Secretariat concluded that the documents reviewed during the visit appeared to be consistent with the information provided by the governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of the United States of America on 6 April and on 17 April 2009, respectively. At the same time, both States Parties demonstrated full transparency and cooperation in providing all required and available information in support of the review. Moreover, the Permanent Representation of Iraq to the OPCW was informed by the Secretariat about the visits, both in advance and subsequent to their conclusion.

Abandoned chemical weapons

30. China and Japan have continued their cooperation in dealing with the historic legacy of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China. Japan, with assistance from China, has conducted on-site investigations and recovery and identification operations at various locations on the territory of China. In addition, China and Japan have held consultations with regard to the excavation and recovery activities at Haerbaling and, in this respect, Japan has indicated that it has decided to conduct a survey using ground-penetrating radar to obtain accurate information on the ACWs buried in Haerbaling.
31. Furthermore, preliminary preparations for mobile destruction operations in Nanjing are under way. I encourage both countries to continue their cooperation to enable the commencement of the destruction of the already excavated and recovered abandoned chemical weapons using a mobile destruction facility in Nanjing, as early as possible.
32. On its part, the Secretariat continues to work with Japan and China with a view to supporting efforts towards the destruction of these abandoned chemical weapons. Trilateral consultations on the issue were held in The Hague in February, Tokyo in June, and Beijing in October 2009. These consultations reaffirmed the importance of exchanging information and views on issues relating to the recovery and destruction of these ACWs, and offered also the opportunity for further work towards the finalisation of a facility arrangement and a detailed plan for verification.

Non-proliferation and industry inspections

Mr Chairperson,

33. Allow me to move on now to Article VI inspections. Since the beginning of this year, 201 inspections have been completed, amounting to 97% of the total number of Article VI inspections budgeted. This total includes nine Schedule 2 inspections with sampling and analysis. I fully expect that we will complete the Article VI inspection programme over the next three weeks, as scheduled.

Other chemical production facility site selection

34. Regarding OCPF site selection, I am pleased that the Council at its Fifty-Eighth Session noted the report of the Secretariat on the results of the modified site-selection methodology for 2008.
35. Based on the results of the selection for OCPF inspections that have taken place in 2009, the Secretariat will provide a further report to the Council at its next session. Preliminary analysis indicates that the overall results for 2009 appear to be in line with the results for 2008: that is, countries that have declared a relatively large number of OCPFs have received more inspections than was the case using the previous methodology.
36. On the other hand, the number of States Parties that receive OCPF inspections in any given year is declining due to the uneven distribution of the plant sites across the world, and this trend cannot be affected by amending the modified methodology.
37. I hasten to repeat that the present OCPF site-selection methodology is only an interim measure. In accordance with paragraph 25 of Part IX of the Verification Annex, a definitive decision in this area is the responsibility of the Conference of the States Parties. I therefore encourage States Parties to take action in this regard at the earliest opportunity, and I wish also to reaffirm the Secretariat's readiness to provide them with all necessary assistance in that endeavour.
38. All of these issues related to OCPFs were discussed in detail at a widely attended workshop held at the OPCW last week. I sincerely thank Ambassador Denot Medeiros of Brazil for accepting my invitation to chair this important workshop and for having guided it so ably to success.
39. I also wish to express my profound appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, without whose generous financial contribution this event would not have been possible. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Canada, which also made a voluntary contribution to the workshop.
40. This event having served only as a platform for dialogue and to promote a better understanding of issues related to other chemical production facilities, I am confident that its outcome will find appropriate reflection in the work that is currently under way in the Executive Council under Industry Cluster consultations, which are being so ably led by Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk from South Africa.
41. I would like to make one final point about OCPF inspections: we are indeed already making progress on another matter of concern for States Parties, namely incorrect declarations that result in OCPF inspections conducted at sites that turn out to be non-inspectable. The percentage of OCPF inspections at non-inspectable sites peaked in 2007 when 11% of those facilities were non-inspectable, and then dropped to 4% in 2008, and so far this year it also stands at 4%, so we have made good progress on that front. This is an indication that the Secretariat is receiving more accurate OCPF declarations that allow us to make better use of our resources.

Mr Chairperson,

42. Following the decision by the Council at its Fifty-First Session, EC-51/DEC.1, dated 27 November 2007, the Secretariat has continued to publish status reports on the timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Convention. Since the last session of the Conference, the Secretariat has received initial declarations from five States Parties. This leaves 11 States Parties that have yet to make any initial declarations, plus two that have yet to submit an initial declaration under Article VI, and one under Article III. I encourage these States Parties to complete their declaration obligations without delay.
43. The number of timely submissions of annual declarations on past activities (ADPA) had increased from 38 to 57 as at 1 April 2009. Unfortunately, this improvement was not repeated for the timely submission of Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 annual declarations on anticipated activities (ADAA), which fell from 39 to 35 as at 2 November 2009.
44. Declarations provide the basis for all our verification activities and I encourage all States Parties to submit their declarations in line with the deadlines laid down by the Convention.

Guidance and tools to facilitate declarations

45. Just before the last session of the Conference, an updated version of the Declarations Handbook was released in English, incorporating all relevant Council and Conference decisions since the last version was released in 2002, and improving the guidance on industry declarations. In April this year, versions in the other official languages were released.

VIS, EDNA, and electronic declarations

46. The Secretariat has continued to develop the Verification Information System, VIS, and the associated software, the electronic declarations tool for National Authorities, EDNA.
47. This year, the development of VIS has focussed on consolidating our use of the application for Article VI information and records management and the design and development of the Category 1 chemical weapons module. States Parties can now request redacted data in electronic format, and soon we will be able to provide copies of major reports such as the Verification Implementation Report (VIR) on CD-ROM. In order to take advantage of the benefits of VIS, I have approved some reorganisation within the Declarations Branch.
48. Following the introduction of EDNA Version 1 at last year's session of the Conference, I am pleased to say that uptake has been good, with the number of States Parties submitting ADPA declarations in electronic format increasing from 7 to 21 as a result. Version 2 of EDNA, which adds the ability to handle Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 plant site declarations to the existing OCPF and aggregate national data functionality, was introduced during the National Authorities meeting immediately preceding this Conference. With this enhancement, the Technical Secretariat looks forward to receiving more declarations electronically. I encourage States Parties that

have not yet done so to contact the Secretariat to arrange for guidance sessions on the submission of declarations electronically and to provide support and training, as appropriate, on the use of this software.

Tools to assist in the identification of scheduled chemicals

49. Over the past 12 months, the Secretariat has continued to develop tools to facilitate the identification of scheduled chemicals by National Authorities, customs authorities, and the chemical industry for the purposes of implementing the declaration and transfer provisions of the Convention.
50. In April 2009, an updated version of the Handbook on Chemicals was released. This new edition contains information on over 1,300 scheduled chemicals and riot control agents that have been declared to the Secretariat.
51. In May 2009, the Secretariat released the Scheduled Chemicals Database, which is accessible online through the OPCW website. This database has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the Joint Action programme. The Scheduled Chemicals Database contains information on the scheduled chemicals declared to the OPCW that are contained in the Handbook on Chemicals, as well as all scheduled chemicals that had been assigned Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) registry numbers as at 13 January 2009. It must of course be remembered that, although the database contains more than 29,000 scheduled chemicals, it does not contain all possible scheduled chemicals. This is because the manner in which families of chemicals are described in the schedules does not allow for a comprehensive database of all scheduled chemicals.
52. To aid the identification of scheduled chemicals by customs authorities, the Secretariat has been working with the World Customs Organization (WCO) for over three years on a recommendation to provide for the insertion of subheadings for the 34 most frequently traded scheduled chemicals in the harmonised system (HS). This recommendation was adopted in June 2009 by the WCO Council and will run in parallel with the existing WCO recommendation, which covers all scheduled chemicals but which has only been adopted by a relatively small number of States due to its complexity. We hope that the simplified recommendation will be adopted by many more States Parties and thus greatly facilitate the control and collection of data on these chemicals by customs authorities worldwide. The Secretariat will continue to work with the WCO in this important area.

Industry Cluster issues – low concentration guidelines for Schedule 2A and 2A* chemicals

53. The question of guidelines for the declaration of low concentrations of Schedule 2A and 2A* chemicals has remained unresolved for many years, despite exhaustive consultations. I am pleased to be able to inform you that after excellent work by the current facilitator, Mr Giuseppe Cornacchia of Italy, agreement was reached by the Council at its Fifty-Eighth Session (EC-58/DEC.5, dated 16 October 2009) on guidelines to be recommended to the Conference, which are before you as C-14/DEC/CRP.2, dated 29 October 2009.

54. These guidelines set different percentage concentration thresholds for mixtures above and below the verification weight thresholds. No agreement on a specific target date for implementation was reached; instead, the Secretariat was tasked with reporting annually in the VIR, starting in 2012, on progress made by States Parties in implementing this decision and it was recommended that the Third Review Conference assess the progress made in implementing the decision.

Schedule 3 site selection and rate of subsequent inspections

55. I now turn to the selection of Schedule 3 facilities for inspection. Earlier this year, the Secretariat analysed emerging trends for this category of facility for the coming three years. The results of this analysis are contained in the Note by the Secretariat S/772/2009, dated 17 June 2009. I invite States Parties to consider the contents of this Note.
56. The key finding is that by 2012 there will likely be only one remaining State Party with Schedule 3 plant sites available for initial inspection. And, unless new inspectable Schedule 3 plant sites are declared, the current number of initial Schedule 3 inspections (which stands at 27 in 2009) cannot be continued due to the limitations set out in paragraph 16 of Part VIII of the Verification Annex.
57. In order to begin to address this situation in an incremental and balanced manner, we have increased the rate of subsequent inspections at Schedule 3 plant sites from 10% to 20%, starting with the sites to be inspected in 2010. However, further action will most likely have to be taken in the next two years, and I intend to provide an updated analysis in the first half of 2010. Not taking further action in 2010 will likely lead to the need to make sudden and substantial changes in two to three years' time.

Challenge inspections

58. In the course of this year, the Secretariat has continued to maintain its readiness to conduct a challenge inspection, in line with the requirements of the Convention.
59. Among other activities, the Secretariat conducted a no-notice, two-day exercise in early September. This exercise was aimed at testing our ability to respond to an unanticipated challenge-inspection request within the timelines set by the Convention and in accordance with the Secretariat's internal procedures.
60. The exercise demonstrated that the Secretariat is able, in terms of both management and logistics, to respond promptly to a request for a challenge inspection. However, it is always possible and desirable to improve further. On the basis of lessons learned and experiences gained from this exercise, action is already under way to further refine the Secretariat's procedures and preparedness to conduct a challenge inspection.
61. We continue to rely, of course, on the support of Member States in this important area. They have a big responsibility under the Convention. As I have mentioned earlier this year, the Secretariat intends to hold a mock field exercise in 2011, for which consultations are under way with States Parties interested in holding such an exercise.

Reporting on inspection results: publishing an unclassified summary of verification activities

62. Bearing in mind that access to the content of the Verification Implementation Report is restricted, and taking forward a recommendation made by the Second Review Conference, the Secretariat has this year published a summary of verification activities that were conducted in 2007, which is available on our public website as the Note by the Secretariat S/784/2009, dated 7 August 2009. This summary does not contain any confidential information and is consistent with the OPCW's media and public affairs policy. In particular, the summary will be useful to States Parties that lack representation in The Hague. In early 2010, I intend to publish a summary of verification activities conducted in 2008.

Facility agreements

63. As you are aware, facility agreements negotiated between the OPCW and Member States to facilitate inspection activities by our inspectors are approved by the Council. In order for the approved facility agreements to enter into force, they must be signed by both the representative of the OPCW and the representative of the State Party. A number of agreements in this sense that have been approved still require signature. In this respect, I would like to encourage Member States to ensure that their facility agreements are signed so that these come into effect.
64. Two types of change can be made to facility agreements: firstly, amendments to the sections of a facility agreement are submitted to the Council for approval; and secondly, I inform the Council of modifications to the attachments of a facility agreement that have been agreed between the OPCW and the State Party. Regarding modifications, a slight change in practice will be put in place with effect from 2010: the Council will be informed of the modifications to facility agreements by means of a Note that I will submit to the Executive Council, and the modifications will also be reflected in the VIR covering the year in which the Secretariat and the State Party in question agreed on the modifications.

Confidentiality and security

65. In early 2008, I established the Security Audit Team V (SAT-V), tasked with continuing the process of regular external audits of the Secretariat's information systems used for the processing of confidential information. SAT-V concluded its second audit in March 2009, and found that the Secretariat's information security regime generally adhered "to accepted security practices and controls to mitigate identified risks". Details about this exercise are available in Note EC-57/DG.1, dated 3 April 2009.
66. The Secretariat also continued to support the work of the Commission for the Settlement of Disputes Related to Confidentiality (the Confidentiality Commission), which elected a new Chairperson and conducted a two-day dispute settlement exercise at its Eleventh Meeting in May 2009.

International cooperation and assistance

Assistance and protection

Mr Chairperson,

67. Activities in the area of assistance and protection against chemical weapons continue to attract considerable interest amongst States Parties. During the year, the Secretariat conducted national, subregional and regional capacity-building courses, seminars, workshops, and exercises for response specialists dealing with chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals in a number of countries: Algeria, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Jamaica, Peru, Spain, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. In addition, the Secretariat jointly organised assistance and protection training courses related to offers made under Article X of the Convention with the National Authorities of the Czech Republic, Finland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, and Switzerland. I express once again our warm thanks to all the countries and institutions that provided support for these activities.
68. Also during the reporting year, in order to assess offers of assistance from States Parties under paragraph 7 of Article X of the Convention, the Secretariat carried out visits to Austria, Cuba, France, Japan, and Ukraine. A visit to India is planned for December.
69. Our next major field exercise on the delivery of assistance (ASSISTEX 3) will be held in Tunisia from 11 to 15 October 2010. So far, the Secretariat has received nominations of national teams from 10 States Parties as well as from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA). The Secretariat also plans to support the participation in the exercise of three subregional teams from East, North, and West Africa that will involve 18 participating countries.
70. Just recently the Secretariat, with the cooperation of the Government of Tunisia, organised the initial planning meeting with the representatives of the participating States Parties in order to discuss the organisational aspects of the exercise. I want to convey our deep gratitude to the Government of Tunisia for its offer to host ASSISTEX 3 and to the Permanent Representation of Tunisia to the OPCW, as well as the National Authority of Tunisia, for their continuing cooperation to make this a successful event.

International cooperation

71. With regard to activities under Article XI, the tenth edition of the Associate Programme concluded on 25 September 2009. The programme was expanded to accommodate more participants under the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa, the Africa Programme, to which I will refer later. Twenty-eight participants from 27 Member States successfully completed the programme, 15 of them from Africa. I would like to express my appreciation for the financial and in-kind contributions made by Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and for the industry support provided by Member States for this flagship programme.

72. Similarly, other capacity-building programmes, including those that focussed on enhanced participation from Africa, were conducted with successful and satisfactory outcomes. Collaboration took place with African institutions such as the Pan-Africa Chemistry Network and the Royal Society of Chemistry at the University of Nairobi. To enhance the capacity of laboratories, technical assistance visits were also conducted to five laboratories in the GRULAC region.
73. I would like to make a special mention of the successful first basic analytical chemistry course in Africa, which was jointly organised by the OPCW, the South African National Authority, VERIFIN, and Protechnik Laboratories in Pretoria, South Africa, where the event took place. Fourteen African chemistry professionals from 12 African countries benefited from this course.
74. The basic analytical chemistry course is of particular significance to the OPCW, as it was the first activity under the Africa Programme to be undertaken for nationals of African countries at an African institution. I express my sincere gratitude to the Government of South Africa and to the South African Council for the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction for their support for this event, and to Protechnik Laboratories for hosting the course.
75. Another new initiative undertaken under Article XI was an analytical skills development training course at the national level, delivered at the Research Centre for Chemistry of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences in Serpong, West Java, Indonesia. The training on sample preparation and trace analysis of compounds related to the Chemical Weapons Convention was supported by local analytical chemists who had participated in our OPCW-run analytical skills development courses.
76. In terms of collaboration with other institutions, we continue to benefit from support provided by VERIFIN, the Spiez Laboratory, and the Technical University of Delft, which host annual internships for the training of young scientists in different areas related to the Convention. The Government of the Netherlands has for the fourth consecutive year provided generous financial support for the internships at TU Delft. Also this year, the governments of China and the Republic of Korea have made available a voluntary contribution under the Africa Programme, each supporting two internships.
77. The International Foundation for Science in Stockholm, Sweden, has continued to provide invaluable assistance for research projects to scientists and researchers from developing countries and economies in transition. Together with the foundation, as well as independently, we have so far extended financial assistance to 303 research projects since the inception of the programme in 1998, of which 148 research projects have been for Africa.
78. Under the Conference Support Programme, the Secretariat has supported 27 scientific events, enabling as many as 176 scientists and researchers to participate in these scientific forums. Seven of these events were held in Africa and 52 sponsorships were offered to African nationals.
79. Under the auspices of the Equipment Exchange Programme, the OPCW Laboratory has donated four used GC-MS instruments to institutions in Armenia, Kenya, Nigeria,

and South Africa. I would like to thank especially the Government of China for its generous donation of 10 desktop computers in support of the Africa Programme.

80. Industry outreach to support safety in chemicals management is a new initiative in the field of international cooperation, and in this context an important regional event was hosted by Japan, while Germany provided a voluntary contribution to support the first edition of a course on promoting chemical safety management for the Africa Region at the Bergische University of Wuppertal (BUW), Germany. I commend both governments for their continuing support of OPCW activities.

Implementation support

81. A positive trend that is emerging is the increasing focus of National Authorities on the implementation of the different facets of the Convention that are additional to its core obligations. National Authorities are showing growing interest in assistance meant to develop secondary regulations and rules for focussed outreach to stakeholders such as customs and licensing authorities, and for building capacity within National Authorities to receive OPCW inspections. During 2009, the Implementation Support Programme continued to be carefully balanced to accommodate both regular activities and new activities such as the workshops in Hong Kong, Istanbul, and Tehran that respond to the specific requests and requirements of National Authorities. This reflects a growing maturity in the work undertaken by National Authorities and their efforts to pursue the effective implementation of the Convention.
82. During this year, 14 bilateral technical assistance visits took place to States Parties in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Four annual regional meetings of National Authorities were held in Bulgaria, Mexico, Morocco, and Viet Nam. I would like to thank these States Parties for co-hosting the regional meetings and for their support, which is invaluable to the achievement of the objectives of the OPCW. Two training courses for National Authority personnel and 10 regional and subregional customs training courses also took place during the year. During 2009, the Secretariat has also reached out to parliamentarians and other stakeholder groups in order to create awareness about the Convention's requirements.
83. At this juncture, I would like to thank the governments of the Netherlands, Norway, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Qatar for providing voluntary contributions to support the Secretariat's implementation support activities. This support is absolutely essential in enabling the Secretariat to offer increased assistance to other Member States. Permit me also to especially thank the European Union for its financial support in this area and a number of other OPCW activities and programmes through various EU Joint Actions. This support continues through the decision by the Council of the European Union of 27 July 2009, earmarking over EUR two million in support of OPCW programmes. Lastly, I would also like to recognise the in-kind contributions of those States that have hosted and assisted the Secretariat in implementing all the activities in 2009.

Africa Programme

84. In respect of the Africa Programme, the Technical Secretariat has continued to engage with African States Parties with regard to their needs and in order to deliver

programmes and courses designed to enable them to effectively implement the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am particularly pleased with the fact that a number of activities related to the Africa Programme, which I have just mentioned, are already yielding tangible results.

85. However, the full implementation and ultimate success of the Africa Programme require continuous, active involvement of African States in identifying their specific needs.
86. The availability of voluntary contributions from Member States has played a significant role in supporting the efforts of the Secretariat. In this regard I would particularly like to acknowledge Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, and Algeria, as well as the European Union, all of which have contributed to this Programme.
87. In implementing the OPCW strategy to promote stronger interaction with African countries, especially through their National Authorities, as well as with African institutions, we have established a task force for cooperation with the African Union, composed of experts from across the Secretariat. The first meeting of the task force has already taken place, and new ideas and suggestions on how to go forward are being collected.
88. Since the last session of the Conference, our International Cooperation and Assistance Division, under the very able leadership of Ms Kalimi Mworira, has developed an evaluation questionnaire on the Africa Programme that was distributed at the meeting of National Authorities from Africa held in Morocco in November. We expect that the responses will assist us in the refining of the activities under the programme.

Implementation of Article VII

Mr Chairperson,

89. National implementation of Article VII obligations by States Parties continues to make steady progress: 98% of the States Parties have established or designated National Authorities. Additionally, 46% of States Parties now have the necessary domestic legal measures in place to implement the Convention. Most critically, the measures to prosecute and punish those who violate the Convention's provisions are now being fully incorporated. A further 22% of States Parties are in the process of completing the crucial task of finalising the national legislation.
90. The main developments in States Parties, and the results achieved, are detailed in my report on the status of the implementation of Article VII, which the Conference has before it as C-14/DG.9, dated 21 October 2009. Further progress has been made since the cut-off date of that report.
91. Since the last session of the Conference, seven additional States Parties have designated or established their National Authorities (namely the Bahamas, Barbados, the Comoros, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Iraq, and Lebanon), thus bringing the number of National Authorities to 184, or 98% of our States Parties.

92. Further progress has continued to be made also with regard to the adoption of the necessary legislative and/or administrative measures to fully and effectively implement the Convention. Thus, as at November 2009, 46% of our membership had adopted legislation covering all key areas.
93. Although of course very encouraging, the statistics also show that 102 States Parties have yet to complete the task of implementing the Convention at the national level and therefore have to continue their efforts in this area. We, of course, remain ready to support them in that task.

Universality and external relations

Mr Chairperson,

94. The Conference has before it a report on the implementation of the action plan on universality for the period from 19 November 2008 to 11 September 2009, as EC-58/DG.9 C-14/DG.8, dated 29 September 2009. This document illustrates the activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat in the past year in this area.
95. Also in 2009, important and very significant developments have contributed to bringing the goal of universality within reach. Universality has finally been achieved in the Americas with the ratification by the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas. In the Middle East, together with Iraq, the Convention has entered into force for Lebanon since the last session of the Conference. Their recent accession has been widely welcomed, and justly so, and indeed the respective decisions of the Iraqi and Lebanese authorities deserve our full praise.
96. As close as we are to the goal of universality, there is still work to be done in this area. One of the main and most delicate tasks in this context remains to convince Israel, Egypt, and the Syrian Arab Republic in the Middle East to join the Convention. The reasons for their reluctance are well known, but the Technical Secretariat and I personally continue our efforts to convey to them the message that the Convention has to be assessed on its own merits and benefits, while it cannot be held hostage to other issues.
97. I am grateful particularly to Israel and Egypt, which have chosen to maintain a constructive dialogue with the OPCW, both in The Hague and in their capitals. They have also accepted my proposal for OPCW technical goodwill missions. A team of the Technical Secretariat travelled to Israel in June. I want to express my deep appreciation to Israel for the warm reception accorded to the team and for the very open and useful discussions relating to the implementation of the Convention. This mission represented an important step forward in our ongoing dialogue with Israel, and we hope that it will encourage Israel to ratify the Convention. I also note that Israel is once again participating as an observer in the Conference and welcome their presence here today.
98. Last October, during my visit to the United Nations Headquarters, I also had a meeting with the Syrian Permanent Representative to the United Nations. I am very grateful to him for having accepted my invitation for this meeting, where I had the opportunity to address the issue of universality. I hope that these contacts between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Secretariat will be sustained.

99. The other area that will require our continued attention in terms of universality is South-East Asia, where Myanmar, an original signatory to the Convention, has yet to take the next logical decision to ratify. I do look forward to that. I myself have had meetings with the authorities of Myanmar, and I think that we can expect them to make some progress. The Secretariat continues its contacts with this State not Party and invites its participation in relevant OPCW events and meetings.
100. On its part, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to shun opportunities for interaction and rejects our invitations for bilateral meetings and participation in OPCW activities. This of course is very regrettable. Whilst the Secretariat continues its efforts to engage North Korea, I appeal to all States, including in particular those States actively working to resolve other crucial security issues in the Korean Peninsula, to assist the OPCW in its endeavours. Indeed, no country that remains outside the Convention should be under the impression that the Organisation is indifferent to its aloofness or prepared to accord to it the objectionable privilege of keeping open the chemical weapons option. Indeed, the Second Review Conference stated very clearly that all States outside the Convention should join the treaty immediately and without preconditions.
101. Finally, as regards Africa, while Somalia remains affected by the civil strife, we look forward to Angola joining soon, and we have had contact with them.
102. I wish to express our gratitude to the Member States and to the European Union for their contributions to the Secretariat's efforts in the area of universality.
103. Regarding external relations, I would also like to mention that I had the opportunity to visit a number of States Parties since the last session of the Conference, namely Switzerland, Austria, Bulgaria, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, China, Turkey, Croatia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mexico, Chile, Morocco, Armenia, Italy, and the Holy See. In this context, I was also able to address important conferences that touched upon issues of key importance for the success of the Chemical Weapons Convention. These occasions represent important opportunities to build closer ties and intensify our cooperation not only with our Member States, but also with their relevant national communities of scientists, academics, and representatives of the private sector.

NGO coalition meeting

104. Whilst addressing universality, I am extremely pleased to note that on the sidelines of this Conference, a group of more than 30 NGOs will hold a two-day meeting to discuss the establishment of a formal NGO coalition to support the Chemical Weapons Convention. This is the largest number of NGOs ever to attend an OPCW event and they include policy institutes, think-tanks, training centres, and academic institutions representing nearly every region of the world. The primary goal of the proposed coalition is to supplement the efforts of the OPCW with focused action by civil society to achieve universality of the Convention and complete chemical demilitarisation, as well as to attain comprehensive national implementation of the Convention globally. This initiative, which I applaud, is in accordance with the recommendations of the Second Review Conference, which underlined the importance of the involvement of all stakeholders and encouraged the development of such cooperation, with due regard to

the role and responsibilities of States Parties and their National Authorities, and to do so on the broadest possible geographical basis. I therefore wish the NGOs every success in this very worthy undertaking and to reconfirm to the Conference that the Secretariat will provide its assistance to the NGO meeting.

The OPCW's contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

Mr Chairperson,

105. The Technical Secretariat has continued to offer its full support to the Executive Council's Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, which serves as a forum for sharing information and best practices among Member States, as well for substantive discussions on the issue of the OPCW's contribution to the global efforts in this field. I note the comprehensive paper (EC-57/NAT.6, dated 8 July 2009) entitled "The Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism – A Platform for Promoting OPCW Active Engagement in the Global Anti-Terrorist Efforts", issued by France at the conclusion of the facilitation conducted by one of its delegates over several years, as well as the launching last week of a new phase, under the able facilitation of a delegate from Australia, that could result in the OPCW expanding and deepening its focus on this important issue. I reaffirm that we will continue to support the Open-Ended Working Group's work to the full.
106. This positive development dovetails with the Secretariat's own sustained engagement on the matter since the adoption by the Council in 2001 of its decision concerning the OPCW's contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts (EC-XXVII/DEC.5, dated 7 December 2001).
107. In that sense, although the OPCW is not an anti-terrorist organisation, there is a clear expectation in the international community that it will contribute to the global efforts in this field. For instance, as we all know, concrete references to the Convention and the OPCW are to be found in relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, such as Resolution 1540 (2004), as well as in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA). In this context, therefore, the Secretariat has continued to respond positively to invitations to participate in international meetings related to this issue. The Secretariat's contribution to such events is consistent with the guidance of the policy-making organs including that of the Second Review Conference, and is invariably carried out within the strict limits of its specific mandate, as well as fully respecting the confidentiality provisions of our Organisation. Throughout the years, the policy-making organs have been kept informed of activities of the Secretariat by means of reference to the matters in all my statements and through relevant documentation that the Secretariat intends to update early next year. Furthermore, all of our presentations made at United Nations events have been published by the United Nations in journals or placed on seminar-related websites. The United Nations Secretary-General has personally conveyed to me the deep gratitude of the organisation and himself for the important contribution that the OPCW has made to these United Nations events.
108. In June 2009, at the invitation of the Chairman of the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, I addressed that Committee in New York on the

implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention relevant to Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001).

109. In March 2009, the Secretariat also hosted a seminar entitled “Multilateral Approaches to Non-Proliferation – the Chemical Dimension”, which was co-organised with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).
110. The Secretariat participated in the recent comprehensive review of the status of implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), held in New York. At this meeting, the Secretariat updated the 1540 Committee about the implementation of the Convention and how its support and capacity-building programmes contribute to our Member States’ ability to implement the Convention, thereby also strengthening their capacity to deal with the obligations under Resolution 1540, and ultimately with the issue of terrorism.
111. Furthermore, the Technical Secretariat co-organised and supported three workshops to discuss how implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention contributes to the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) in the area of chemical weapons, and how the OPCW can enhance the promotion of effective national standards and practices in the chemical domain. Two events took place in this respect, at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations (Clingendael) in The Hague in March 2009 and in Cavtat, Croatia, in April 2009. Both events were widely attended by representatives of all regional groups.
112. Last spring, an event entitled “International Seminar on National Implementation of Non-Proliferation Obligations: The OPCW as an Example of Effective Assistance in National Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention” was successfully organised by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with OPCW participation. It served as a model for developing a more integrated approach against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and towards international assistance at both national and regional levels. Coincidentally, one of its outcomes was the initiation of the Implementation Programme against CBRNE Terrorism (IPACT), which I encourage Member States to join the Secretariat in supporting, as appropriate.
113. At the same time, the Secretariat continued to participate in the work of the United Nations Counter-terrorism Implementation Task Force, which oversees the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-terrorism Strategy. The OPCW has been a member of the CTITF since its creation in 2005.
114. The OPCW is participating in the work of this task force as a member of the working group on preventing and responding to WMD terrorist attacks, and the visit by the Chairman of the CTITF in September 2009 underscores the role and contribution of the Organisation on these critical issues.
115. In 2006, I presented to the Council a Note (EC-44/DG.8, dated 9 March 2006) describing the OPCW’s contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts. The Note outlined the parameters within which the OPCW’s substantive contribution was offered and executed. I intend to present to the Council at its Fifty-Ninth Session an update to this Note that will serve as a comprehensive reference to the Organisation’s

mandate derived from relevant decisions of the Council and the Conference, including its special sessions, and will also enumerate the various activities that are conducted pursuant to these decisions. We also need to bear in mind that there is a commonality of objectives established by such decisions of the United Nations as the Security Council Resolution 1540 and the United Nations Global Counter-terrorism Strategy, which will find adequate reflection in the updated Note.

Safety and security at chemical plants and relationship with the stakeholders of the Convention

116. Following concerns expressed at both the First and Second Review Conferences that chemical facilities may become subject to attacks by terrorists or other incidents that could lead to the release or theft of toxic chemicals, we have continued to encourage States Parties to exchange experiences and discuss related issues in enhancing the security of chemical facilities.
117. This year, for the first time, the Annual Meeting of National Authorities, which was held from 27 to 29 November, included a segment dedicated to the issue of safety and security at chemical plants.
118. Furthermore, the Secretariat participated in the Asia-Pacific Seminar on Developments in Chemical Safety, Security and Chemical Counter-Terrorism held in Canberra, Australia, in June 2009.
119. I would also like to report that Saudi Arabia has provided a financial contribution for the work of the Secretariat on the issue of safety and security at chemical plants. I wish to thank the Government of Saudi Arabia for its contribution.

Administrative and financial matters

120. I am pleased to note the unqualified audit opinion that the External Auditor has placed on the OPCW's financial statements for the period that ended on 31 December 2008. In his report, the External Auditor also made a positive note on the internal-control systems which are in operation at OPCW.
121. Pursuant to the decision by the Conference at its Tenth Session (C-10/DEC.6, dated 10 November 2005), the Vice-President of the German Supreme Audit Institution has taken over the duties of External Auditor of OPCW for an initial term of three years, from 2009 to 2011. I wish to take this opportunity to welcome him, and assure him that he will receive full cooperation during his term with the OPCW. I would also like to express our appreciation to the Auditor-General of Pakistan, the outgoing External Auditor of OPCW, for the support and advice that he and his team have provided to the OPCW over the years.
122. In addition to the report on OPCW income and expenditure for the period ending June 2009, which is also before the Conference as EC-58/DG.2, dated 7 August 2009, I would like to inform you that the outstanding 2009 assessed contributions reflect a receipt level of assessed contributions of 88.1%. There has been a significant improvement in receipts over the past few months. However, our ability to meet the core objectives in 2009 still depends on our receiving from States Parties their

assessed national contributions in full and on time, and I appeal therefore to those who have not yet completed payment to do so. I further encourage States Parties that are in arrears to regularise the payment of their outstanding annual contributions, including through multi-year payment plans, which are available to them.

123. The OPCW's commitment to implementing the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) remains unchanged. In this respect, a draft decision has been submitted to the Conference (C-14/DEC/CRP.6, dated 9 November 2009) on the adoption of the IPSAS by the OPCW. I would like to report that IPSAS will be implemented as from 1 January 2010 in parallel with the current United Nations System of Accounting Standards (UNSAS), and IPSAS-compliant pro-forma financial statements will be produced during the 2010 reporting period. Proposed amendments to the OPCW Financial Regulations and Rules will be submitted to the governing bodies in 2010 as part of the effort to harmonise existing regulations and rules with IPSAS. Subsequent to the Conference's approval of these proposals, the OPCW financial statements for the reporting period beginning 1 January 2011 will be IPSAS compliant.

2010 Draft Programme and Budget

Mr Chairperson,

124. Since I presented the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010 to Member States in July, extensive consultations have taken place and the Executive Council has submitted a favourable recommendation to the Conference.
125. In this regard, I wish to express our gratitude to the facilitators, His Excellency Mr Francisco José Aguilar-de Beauvilliers Urbina, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, and Mr Martin Strub of Switzerland, for their contributions.
126. I would like to stress, once again, that the Budget has proposed calls for zero nominal growth in expenditures, thus continuing the trend the Secretariat has been pursuing in recent years. This will be the fifth year in a row that we are proposing such an approach. It is very much a consolidating Budget, calling for expenditures of EUR 74.5 million for next year, and aiming to meet all of the OPCW's core objectives in the most efficient and economical manner possible.
127. I am pleased with the positive feedback received during the facilitations regarding the progress made towards a more "results-based" approach. As I mentioned when I presented the Budget to the Executive Council, we will continue this evolutionary process, which provides for the application of more measurable key performance indicators. Indeed, it would be my intention that the Secretariat move even beyond results-based budgeting towards applying the principles of results-based management. The Office of Internal Oversight has provided its advice on this matter, and we will continue to pursue it, also with the support of the External Auditor.

Personnel matters and recruitment

128. The Technical Secretariat has continued to implement the tenure policy of the OPCW in accordance with its regulatory framework and the decisions of the Conference of the States Parties. I am gratified by the fact that, as reported in the past to the

Executive Council, on the several occasions on which the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization was asked to review the implementation of the tenure policy, it was consistently found to be fully compliant with the OPCW statutory framework. And only last year, the Second Review Conference welcomed the fact that implementation of the tenure policy had proceeded as indicated by the First Review Conference. So we are well on course. Let me add that the Secretariat is on track also to ensure the smooth achievement of the 2012 goal concerning the tenure policy, set forth in the Conference's decision, C-11/DEC.7, dated 7 December 2006.

129. The Secretariat has also made further improvements to its programmes in the areas of recruitment, staff administration, and human resources services.

Composition of the Technical Secretariat

130. The appointment of staff in the Secretariat reflects the faithful implementation of paragraph 44 of Article VIII of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which states very clearly and in mandatory fashion that the "paramount" (in other words, the supreme and overriding) "consideration in the employment of the staff ... shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity". This unambiguous provision establishes a clear obligation for the Director-General. During my years at the helm of the Secretariat, it has been invariably applied through a transparent process that involves independent internal recruitment panels and ensures that only candidates found suitable by such panels are considered for appointment. I note with satisfaction that, in the view of many, such uncompromising respect for the Convention has significantly contributed to the efficiency and to the high standing enjoyed today by the Secretariat in particular and the OPCW as a whole.
131. The same paragraph of the Convention subsequently states that "due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible". Whilst the geographical element is quite clearly subsidiary to the overriding one of suitability, whenever the latter is present, the appointment of nationals of as many Member States as feasible is actively pursued by the Secretariat. In this regard, I note with satisfaction, for instance, that since 2002, the number of nationals from certain regions has increased. This is, for example, the case for Africa, from where 10.6% of all Secretariat fixed-term staff and 11.4% of all Secretariat fixed-term Professional category staff will come as from early 2010. These figures can be compared to the corresponding ones for Africa in 2002, which were respectively 8.5% and 9.5%. To better appreciate these figures, it must be noted that the number of Secretariat fixed-term staff has remained static for a decade and that today it is lower than it was at the time of entry into force, in 1997. However, we have today 101 Member States more than we had in 1997.
132. Another point to bear in mind is that the turnover of personnel in the Secretariat is a very dynamic matter, as new vacancies are continuously being generated through natural attrition, including resignations and retirement, and the implementation of the tenure policy.

133. It must also be noted that the ability of the Secretariat to incorporate nationals from any country depends in the first instance, and fundamentally, on such nationals applying for positions in the Secretariat and successfully completing our transparent procedure for selection of staff. The Director-General cannot appoint persons who have not applied or are not suitable. The Secretariat tries its best by advertising the vacancies, but cannot be expected to cover individually and fully each of the 188 countries of the Organisation. Therefore, it has been the practice since I became Director-General that the Secretariat regularly informs regional groups about existing vacancies, seeking their support in bringing them to the attention of their nationals. Indeed, I again appeal to Members States and to the regional groups to actively support our recruitment efforts by ensuring that their nationals are duly acquainted with the vacancies that exist and which regularly occur in the Secretariat.
134. To conclude this point, I wish to inform the Conference that, in the light of the interest shown by some countries and a regional group concerning the composition of the Secretariat staff, I intend to propose to the Council at its next session the inclusion in its agenda of a yearly item entitled: "Composition of the Technical Secretariat". I will propose that the Council specify in a decision which information it would wish to receive through an annual report by the Director-General. In this connection, it might be useful to bear in mind the reports that the United Nations Secretariat presents on the same subject to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly every year. In these comprehensive annual documents, a complex series of statistics is presented by the United Nations Secretariat so as to allow not just full transparency, but also a better understanding of the many variables in play. Although the United Nations Secretariat is much larger than ours and its regulatory framework is also quite different from the OPCW's, the UNGA reports could assist the Council in identifying the information it desires to receive from the Secretariat.

Scientific Advisory Board

135. The SAB held two sessions in 2009. During its Thirteenth Session in March/April it discussed the basics of nanotechnology and the toxicology of nanomaterials. In the assessment of the SAB, nanomaterials are not currently known to have an intrinsic toxicity that would make them attractive for use in chemical weapons. Therefore, the risk that they pose to the Convention is regarded as low. During its Fourteenth Session in November, the SAB discussed the question of applications of nanomaterials to improve defensive counter-measures against chemical weapons. It decided to continue to maintain a close watch on developments in nanotechnology and nanomaterials. The SAB also considered the report of the fourth meeting of the Temporary Working Group on Sampling and Analysis, which was held on 5 and 6 November, during which the group discussed the questions of sample preparation for aqueous solutions of degradation products, emerging techniques with possible applications for on-site analysis as well as the analysis of toxins, and criteria for trace analysis in investigations of alleged use.
136. As requested by the Second Review Conference, the SAB also provided advice to the Secretariat on the review of the decision on the list of approved equipment with operational requirements and technical specifications (C-I/DEC.71 and Corr.1, both dated 23 May 1997).

137. I would like to continue to underline the importance of securing the necessary financial support for the work of the SAB.
138. There is a growing awareness amongst our States Parties about advances in science and technology and their potential impact on the implementation of the Convention. The SAB is the only body of the OPCW entrusted with the important and challenging task of providing advice to me on such advances and developments. There is obviously a need to continue to secure further resources for maintaining the pace of the activities of the SAB in the coming years. I wish also to place on record my sincere gratitude to all those States Parties, and to the European Union, that have contributed to the SAB trust fund.
139. But there is also a need to ensure the continuity of the work of the SAB and thus its efficiency. In this respect, I hope that the Conference will consider favourably my proposal for extending the terms of office of certain members of the SAB, in order to avoid a severe gap in the expertise of the board.

Appointment of the Director-General

Mr Chairperson,

140. As part of its important agenda, the Conference is also required to consider and approve the recommendation of the Executive Council on the appointment of the next Director-General of the OPCW to succeed me when I conclude my mandate on 24 July 2010.
141. It gives me the greatest satisfaction to see that the unique multilateral spirit of cooperation that signifies the work of the OPCW was at its best when the Council adopted its decision endorsing by consensus the candidature of Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey to be the next person to take the helm of the Organisation, as of 25 July 2010. We can look forward to a unanimous decision by the Conference to formalise this appointment, which recognises the outstanding merit and sterling qualities of Ambassador Üzümcü, both personal and professional. I warmly congratulate Ambassador Üzümcü and wish him the very, very best. I reaffirm to the Conference and to Ambassador Üzümcü my very best disposition to contribute to a smooth transition. And indeed, whilst continuing to fully discharge my responsibilities until the very end of my mandate, I will be all too happy to work with Ambassador Üzümcü over the coming seven-and-a-half months, in order to facilitate his coming on board at cruising speed.
142. Allow me also to praise all the other candidates who participated in the selection process that led to Ambassador Üzümcü's nomination by the Council, as well as their governments, for they all acted with utmost grace and dignity and at no point allowed the atmosphere of goodwill to be in any way compromised. Equally, I pay tribute to the skills and vision of the Chairperson of the Council, Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco of Mexico, who so brilliantly led the selection process and contributed substantially to the Council's ability to complete its delicate task, both on time and smoothly.

Concluding remarks

Mr Chairperson,

143. If I am allowed, I would like to add a few words of my own. Although my mandate will end only on 24 July of next year, since this is the last occasion in which I address the Conference of States Parties in my capacity as Director-General, I would use this opportunity to share with you and the whole membership some additional thoughts.
144. Much as I am fully confident that I come to the end of my mandate with the OPCW in better shape than when I arrived, I am the first to point out that many important challenges remain ahead of the Organisation. Whilst I have referred to some of them earlier in my statement today, when addressing different areas of work, with your indulgence I wish now to elaborate a bit further on some of those aspects. I do so at the end of my statement in order to highlight that this is not part of the Director-General's formal statement, and although I believe it might enjoy the sympathy of some of my colleagues in the Technical Secretariat, it does not necessarily reflect the Secretariat's institutional views.
145. Firstly, Mr Chairperson, on destruction deadlines: there is no question that this issue presents a complex challenge for the OPCW, above all, politically. I say that, above all, it is a political challenge because I am confident that, from the legal point of view, the Convention offers the regulatory framework and means necessary to effectively and fully remedy any possible failure to meet the deadlines.
146. Moreover, it seems to me clear that whilst complete and irreversible chemical disarmament is a fundamental goal of the treaty, the deadlines in themselves, though key instrumental steps to that end, are not an end in themselves. The ultimate success of the treaty should not be tied to any particular date. All the more so when it is very likely that, even after 2012, there will remain outside the treaty countries that possess chemical weapons or have chemical programmes. And we would not want to think that the treaty offers no way of dealing with such cases.
147. Therefore, in my view, we need to address the 2012 timeline, firstly, with prudence—which brings me to applaud the decision of the most recent session of Executive Council to endorse the wise Brazilian proposal to start a process of reflection under the coordination of the Chairperson of the Council. This suggests that States Parties recognise the need for prudent and careful consideration of all relevant factors in advance of any decision they may take regarding 2012.
148. We also need to deal with the 2012 timeline conscious of the long-term political interest which all States Parties surely share in sustaining the validity of the Convention as the international instrument for all present and future chemical weapons disarmament. The Convention will be successful not only if disarmament happens in the straightforward way foreseen in the Convention, but also if, when faced with a deviation from its ideal course, it is capable of responding positively and constructively, as I am sure it is able, and to remedy such a situation. In fact this might be considered a more true test of the real strength of the treaty.

149. I would of course also like to emphasise the great responsibility of the larger possessor States to continue doing everything in their power not just to accelerate destruction but also to recognise the political significance of the issue and to spare no effort in facilitating its diplomatic management. It is logical to expect that the way the international community will react in the face of destruction possibly going beyond 2012 will be greatly influenced not just by the destruction track record and the concrete steps taken to complete the task in the shortest possible time, but also by perceptions about the degree of political commitment, active diplomatic endeavour, and support for the OPCW.
150. Finally on this point, I wish to recall that in the document issued by the Technical Secretariat prior to the Second Review Conference, I suggested that Member States might wish to hold a special meeting on this matter much closer to 2012. I still believe that this would be a good idea.

Mr Chairperson,

151. Allow me also in a personal capacity some reflections on one important aspect of the efforts to ensure the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. I shall not elaborate on challenges that we have discussed for a long time. Rather, let me recall that time and again I have stated my conviction that the Technical Secretariat should significantly augment the Organisation's verification effort concerning the OCPF category of chemical industry. It is not, of course, coincidental that over the past seven years I have included in all my Draft Programmes and Budgets proposals to increase, albeit modestly, the number of inspections in this category.
152. I am confident that this was the right thing to do. At the same time, I must recognise that in the case of some countries, there are objective and probably insurmountable difficulties in achieving, in a reasonable period of years, a number or level of inspections that might be thought sufficient for non-proliferation purposes.
153. This is particularly so in the case of those relatively few States Parties with a large quantity of declared facilities. A basic, even rigid limitation emerges from the Convention itself, which allows for a maximum of twenty combined Schedule 3 and OCPF inspections per year for any country. Consequently, it could take well over 50 years to inspect all of the OCPFs declared by some States Parties.
154. In addition, I should say that it is unlikely that States Parties would approve any time soon the significant increases in fixed-term staff and financial resources such as would be required for any significant leap forward in the number of OCPF inspections conducted each year.
155. In the face of these factors and considerations, I believe that there would be merit in exploring possible complementary approaches for expanding the number of OCPFs inspected each year. To stand a chance of gaining consensus, such approaches should not seek to change in any way the numerical limits of the Convention. Nor should any such approach be detrimental in any way to the verification standards reflected in the Convention. But if such a complementary approach could be implemented without harm to the essential precepts of the Convention, we would have made some significant progress in meeting the OPCW's non-proliferation objectives.

156. In my view, one path worth exploring is to seek the further support of the National Authorities—on which the Convention already relies very significantly.
157. Let me illustrate: For countries with a large quantity of declared plants, a system could be devised by means of which National Authorities themselves would undertake the task of verifying some of their declared OCPFs, particularly those that could be defined as less relevant for treaty purposes. This verification would be without prejudice to the OCPF inspections carried out on more relevant facilities by the Technical Secretariat in the same country under the Secretariat's own yearly programme. The sharing of the burden between the Secretariat and the National Authority would allow for the actual number of facilities under the Convention's oversight to be greater, whilst the number of OPCW inspections in the same country for any one year could remain at approximately the same level as hitherto.
158. Of course, any eventual decision to rely on some National Authorities carrying out part of the verification work for OCPFs would need to be subject to some important preconditions. A properly functioning National Authority would be indispensable, as would the assurance that the National Authority's verification would be in full compliance with the Convention regime for OCPFs. The Technical Secretariat could help in the training of national personnel for such purposes. As part of the scheme, the Secretariat would carry out periodical checks of the National Authorities, maintaining at the same time the possibility of performing spot checks of plants verified by the National Authority. There should be no extraordinary financial implications for the OPCW regular Programme and Budget. All this could be effected through a formal agreement to be negotiated between the National Authority and the Technical Secretariat, which would then be reported to the Executive Council.
159. With the aforementioned provisos, this scheme would in no way depart from the Convention, and it would ensure at the same time the continued effectiveness and credibility of Convention inspections in the field of OCPFs. And, frankly, we must remember that the alternative is not inspecting more or better, but rather, most probably, continuing not to inspect a large number of facilities at all, with the resultant detriment to the efficacy of the Article VI regime.
160. In short, Mr Chairperson, this is just one idea, but I believe very deeply that the time has come for us to brainstorm on this issue of OCPFs and seek a practical way to move forward in an area that is of great importance for non-proliferation purposes and where the present approach, due to its very limited reach, stands little chance of offering adequate levels of verification.

Mr Chairperson,

161. One other matter I wish to refer to is my perception about the need for the OPCW, at some stage in the not too distant future, to take stock of the growing interest on the part of some governments and civil society, in developments related to matters where the Convention might be—perhaps purposely—ambiguous or have lacunae, and which might impact on the ultimate effectiveness of the ban on chemical weapons. Incapacitants or non-lethal weapons is one such area when it comes to the exact types and quantities of chemicals and their permitted use. The Scientific Advisory Board

could help shed some light on this matter and the Third Review Conference might offer the appropriate context for an initial formal look into it.

Mr Chairperson,

162. As I enter the last seven months at the helm of the Technical Secretariat, I cannot but feel considerable satisfaction at the condition of the OPCW today, particularly when bearing in mind the difficulties experienced in the past.
163. That we have today an effective, strong, and credible OPCW is first and foremost the product of States Parties' firm commitment to the implementation of their obligations and to a policy of constructive engagement and consensus. The culture of consensus that inspires the work of the OPCW is important not just for the ultimate success of the Convention but also for multilateralism as a whole in the important arena of disarmament and non-proliferation.
164. I am also confident that during my time in the OPCW, the Technical Secretariat has played a helpful role in making the OPCW what it is today. For my part, I have tried to ensure that at all times the Secretariat performs at the high standard expected from it. And I have done my best always to be available to all of you, to all States Parties without exception, and to bring the message of the OPCW to all corners of the world.
165. I must add that I have always appreciated the confidence, the strong support, and the consideration received from you. I pay special tribute to your Member States' understanding of the need for an apolitical, hardworking, and low-key Technical Secretariat, and to your respect for the office and for the independence of the Director-General—elements that I believe are crucial to the success of the Technical Secretariat, and ultimately of the OPCW.
166. With three more Executive Council sessions remaining on the agenda before I come to the end of my term, I will have plenty of opportunity to thank my colleagues in the Technical Secretariat for their continued support. However, for the record of this Conference, I also wish today to pay tribute to them. I praise their loyalty and dedication to the OPCW, I convey to them my deepest gratitude, and wish them all the very best for the future.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.