

Ambassador Krzysztof Paturej
Poland

Chairman of the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Third Review Conference)

**Statement
to the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties**

Continuation of the Third Review Conference process

1. I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Saad Ibrahim Al-Ali of Iraq, on your election as Chairperson of this Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. It was not so long ago that we worked in close partnership with you as the Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole during the Third Review Conference. This partnership was an important prerequisite for the successful proceedings and outcomes of the Conference.

2. The proceedings of the Review Conference were greatly facilitated by the successful conclusion of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group, under the able Chair of Ambassador Nassima Baghli of Algeria. I would like to express my thanks to Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa for coordinating the work on the Political Declaration. I would also like to extend thanks to the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, and the staff of the Technical Secretariat for their exemplary assistance and support both in the organisational and substantive work.

3. The Third Review Conference was conducted only few months ago, in April 2013. Since then, the agenda of the world community and the work of the OPCW have been dominated by use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and the process of destroying Syrian the chemical weapons programme. Please note that the Third Review Conference was the first global forum to yield consensus language on the issue of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the OPCW was a most visible confirmation of the achievements and the relevance of the OPCW in efforts to get rid of chemical weapons.

4. Does the Third Review Conference matter in view of these developments in the area of chemical weapons, which have changed many established perceptions about the OPCW and chemical weapons prohibition? My answer is YES, Mr Chairman. The Third Review Conference matters. Let me outline the core achievements of the Review Conference process.

5. The Third Review Conference provided, for a first time, a platform of cooperation among the three players: the Member States, the Technical Secretariat, and the all relevant stakeholders, including industry, NGOs, academia, and independent experts. The active engagement of the Secretariat and stakeholders strengthened the open and inclusive character of the OPCW. The active participation of the stakeholders complemented the policy deliberations, provided valuable views, offered a long-term perspective and ensured the additional potential for national capacity-building to reduce chemical threats.

6. The process of the Third Review Conference confirmed the existence of several political advantages of the Chemical Weapons Convention/OPCW regime. The first, core political advantage, is a lack of fundamentally different views on the role of the Convention. The second one is a common view of the success of the Convention as a global disarmament

and non-proliferation treaty. The third advantage is the readiness of the States Parties, Technical Secretariat and the stakeholders to work together to make the prohibition of chemical weapons universal and irreversible. The last advantage, but by no means the least, is the practice of consensus as the method of decision-making in the OPCW. These advantages create a positive environment and the conditions in which we could promote the comprehensive implementation of the Convention and the recommendations ensuing from the Third Review Conference.

7. The positive outcomes of the Third Review Conference are being actively implemented in the follow-up process, under the supervision of the Executive Council. The Seventy-Second Session of the Executive Council, conducted shortly after the Review Conference, welcomed the statement of the Review Conference Chairperson and the proposed follow-up process. I would like to thank the Technical Secretariat for issuing the working paper containing the actionable items from the Third Review Conference, as it constitutes a good reference point for the discussions and further work. The OPCW has established such a follow-up process for the first time, by including a special item on the agenda of each regular session of the Executive Council. I thank HE Ambassador Olexander Horin of Ukraine for his active support of the follow-up process. The follow-up process should be continued in a close cooperation between the Member States and the Technical Secretariat and the stakeholders, including those from the chemical industry, academia and civil society.

8. I would like to propose that an agenda item on the Third Review Conference follow-up be included in the forthcoming sessions of the Conference of States Parties.

9. An active collaboration and engagement of the Convention stakeholders in the follow-up process of the Third Review Conference will develop in practice the role of the OPCW as a platform of cooperation, complement the policy discussions, broaden the OPCW agenda and offer potential for national capacity-building. The process of collaboration with the OPCW stakeholders, in the form of open working group, initiated by the Chairperson of the Third Review Conference and the coordinator of the CWC Coalition, Dr Paul Walker, will be continued. Side-events and other activities will be organised on the occasion of the regular sessions of the OPCW policy-making organs. These activities will assist in keeping the OPCW agenda contemporary and in accommodating the implementation of the Convention in order to meet tomorrow's needs and challenges.

10. In conclusion, I would like to stress that the Third Review Conference process highlighted the successful mission of the OPCW. The Conference consolidated the OPCW, including the Member States, the Technical Secretariat and the stakeholders, around the implementation of all provisions of the Convention. Finally, the Conference provided policy guidance for the next five years. This policy guidance opened new venues for interaction and offered new issues for the future OPCW agenda. The Third Review Conference process should be continued, and should assist in modernising the national implementation of the Convention, enabling the OPCW agenda to meet tomorrow's challenges, and developing the OPCW as a global agency to reduce the chemical threat.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.