

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

Mr Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I welcome all delegations to the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.
2. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the incoming Chairperson of the Conference, Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola-Nicolín of Mexico. This Conference will, I am sure, be well served by your leadership. To assist you in this endeavour, you can count on the full support of the Technical Secretariat.
3. I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the work of your predecessor, Ambassador Vesela Korać of Croatia. She chaired this forum with distinction over what has been a challenging and historic time for the Organisation.
4. I would also like to acknowledge Ambassador Francesco Azzarello of Italy for the able guidance he has provided as Chairperson of the Executive Council. I likewise express my appreciation to his predecessor, Ambassador Álvaro Moerzinger of Uruguay.
5. We look forward today to receiving a video message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki-moon.
6. I am especially pleased to welcome—for the first time at a session of the Conference—representatives of our two newest members, Myanmar and Angola. The Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force for these countries on 7 August and 16 October, respectively, bringing our total membership to 192 States Parties.
7. This positive development reminds us that there can be no justification for remaining outside this global norm. While recognising that this is a decision to be made by sovereign countries, we must do everything possible to persuade Egypt, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan to join the Convention without delay. I have recently written to the Foreign Ministers of these countries, encouraging them to reconsider their positions on the Convention.



8. Since the last session of the Conference, this Organisation has continued to make important progress in eliminating Syria's chemical weapons programme, as well as following up persistent allegations of use of chemical weapons in that country. These efforts have attracted strong support from the United Nations Security Council.
9. We expect that the remaining 0.9% of Syria's declared chemical weapons will be destroyed by the end of the year by Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC in the United States of America. This will mark the complete destruction of all chemical weapons declared by the Syrian Arab Republic.
10. All effluents produced as a result of the neutralisation of sulfur mustard and methylphosphonyl difluoride (DF) aboard the MV Cape Ray were verified by the OPCW as destroyed in March and July. I wish to acknowledge the contributions made by the governments of Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, as well as Veolia and Ekokem, in the disposal of chemicals and effluents.
11. I am pleased to report that 11 of 12 remaining chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) in the Syrian Arab Republic have been destroyed. The Technical Secretariat has verified the destruction of all five underground structures and six aircraft hangars, and has overseen the installation and testing of monitoring equipment, where required. One aircraft hangar remains inaccessible, owing to the security situation.
12. The Secretariat has also continued efforts to clarify elements of Syria's initial declaration. In October, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) issued its most recent report, identifying several outstanding issues. The DAT is continuing its consultations with the Syrian authorities and is expected to issue a further report before the next regular session of the Executive Council, in March 2016.
13. In a major development, on 7 August, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 2235 (2015), authorising the establishment of an OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) to identify those responsible for carrying out attacks with toxic chemicals in the Syrian Arab Republic. The JIM became fully operational on 13 November and has set up offices in New York and The Hague, and plans to establish a presence in Damascus.
14. The JIM is an independent body, to which the Technical Secretariat will offer its assistance and support, including through the work of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM). The JIM is expected to present its first report to the United Nations Security Council, and inform the OPCW Executive Council, in February 2016.
15. The FFM has continued its work over the past year with the firm support of States Parties. Three new reports were issued to States Parties on 29 October regarding three separate sets of incidents of alleged use of toxic chemicals as weapons. Alarming, two of the reports link alleged incidents with confirmed exposure to chemical weapons, resulting, in several instances, in death. In response, the Executive Council adopted a decision (EC-M-50/DEC.1, dated 23 November 2015) expressing grave concern regarding the findings and calling on all relevant parties to extend their full cooperation to the FFM to ensure that it completes its work safely and effectively.

16. In line with Council decision EC-M-48/DEC.1 (dated 4 February 2015), I have included these reports as part of my most recent monthly report last week to the United Nations Secretary-General. The work of the FFM is continuing and its reports and information collected by FFM teams will, as I have mentioned, be made available to the JIM.
17. I have recently established the new Trust Fund for Syria Missions (S/1324/2015, dated 5 November 2015), to provide an additional funding source for missions and contingency operations related to the Syrian Arab Republic, such as the FFM. I strongly encourage you to consider making contributions to the trust fund to ensure that the critically important work of the Secretariat can be carried out without interruption.
18. I will soon circulate a report by Dr Ralf Trapp, outlining lessons learned from the mission of the OPCW in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Secretariat will make arrangements for Dr Trapp to respond to any queries by States Parties in a briefing early next year.
19. As I reported at the October session of the Executive Council, the Government of Iraq accepted an offer by the Technical Secretariat to assist with its investigation into allegations of chemical weapons use in northern Iraq in August 2015. A team of experts from the Technical Secretariat deployed to Iraq on three occasions over recent weeks to provide broad-ranging technical support to the Iraqi authorities.
20. In relation to overall progress on destruction, as at 31 October, the Technical Secretariat had verified the destruction of 64,437 metric tonnes (MTs), or 91.4% of all declared Category 1 chemical weapons stockpiles. Libya completed the disposal of all declared isopropanol alcohol in June and continues to work towards the complete destruction of its remaining Category 2 chemicals. The United States of America began destruction operations for problematic munitions in Pueblo, Colorado, and the main plant destruction operations are expected to get under way at that facility from mid-2016. A delegation from the Executive Council visited Pueblo in March this year.
21. I am pleased to report the completion of operations at four chemical weapons destruction facilities (CWDFs) in the Russian Federation over recent months, namely, at Leonidovka, Shchuchye, Maradykovsky, and Pochep. I commend the efforts of the Russian Government in achieving this important milestone, as well as the valuable support provided by numerous States Parties. With 92% of its stockpile having been eliminated, remaining stocks continue to be destroyed at one CWDF in the Russian Federation, at Kizner.
22. China and Japan have continued to work together on abandoned chemical weapons recovery and destruction operations at Haerbaling and at the mobile facility in Shijiazhuang. They jointly hosted a visit by a delegation from the Executive Council in June.
23. In 2016, the Technical Secretariat will enhance its current planning and operational responsiveness by assigning a number of its inspectors to a new Capacity-Building and Contingency-Planning Cell in the Inspectorate Division. Members of this cell will have multidisciplinary backgrounds and will provide increased support to contingency planning, as well as to capacity-building-related activities, such as the training of

inspectors and the delivery of external training courses as part of our international cooperation-and-assistance programmes.

24. In keeping with the Technical Secretariat's ongoing efforts to expand discussion on the threat from non-State actors, the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, chaired by Ambassador Joe Tony Aidoo of Ghana, established a subworking group to help formulate concrete recommendations. At its first meeting, in November, the subworking group began to consider the legal accountability of non-State actors under the facilitation of Ambassador María Teresa Infante of Chile. Three papers have been issued by the Secretariat to help guide the group's discussions. I encourage States Parties to actively participate in this exercise.
25. The Technical Secretariat has also continued its cooperation with the United Nations and other international organisations. This includes co-chairing the Working Group on Preventing and Responding to WMD<sup>1</sup> Terrorist Attacks, established at the initiative of the OPCW as part of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. In February, the Working Group held its first workshop on its current project: ensuring effective inter-agency interoperability and coordinated communications in the event of a chemical or biological attack, with 17 participating organisations. The resulting analysis is currently being finalised.
26. Since its launch in July 2014, there has been significant progress with the Secure Information Exchange (SIX) system. Twenty-seven States Parties have now registered for the system and have begun using it for the transmission of declarations and declaration-related documents. The Secretariat has also developed capabilities to use the same system for communication with teams in the field. The Secretariat is analysing ways of expanding the use of this system and will continue to update States Parties accordingly.
27. National implementation remains the cornerstone for the ongoing effectiveness and reach of the Convention, and I urge all States Parties to work with the Secretariat and other States Parties to strengthen their efforts in this area. We cannot afford gaps in our global regime at this time of heightened efforts to solidify the gains of chemical disarmament.
28. In 2015, the Technical Secretariat has continued to provide States Parties with training courses, workshops, and seminars, structured primarily around Articles VII, X, and XI of the Convention. Over EUR 4.6 million of regular budget funding in 2015 enabled the delivery of more than 130 training courses, workshops, and seminars to some 1,750 participants from all regional groups. I wish to acknowledge the generous financial contributions made by a number of States Parties and the European Union, as well as the assistance provided in hosting programme events.
29. I wish to encourage States Parties to provide feedback on our recent efforts to better tailor international cooperation-and-assistance activities to specific needs. Furthermore, the Secretariat would appreciate inputs from States Parties that are

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<sup>1</sup> WMD = weapon(s) of mass destruction.

active in regional and subregional organisations as to how cooperation with such organisations could extend and add value to our capacity-building efforts.

30. Today I will launch the Practical Guide for Medical Management of Chemical Weapons Casualties. This important contribution to alleviating the suffering of chemical weapons victims was realised under the direction of Professor Mahdi Balali-Mood of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with inputs from a range of experts. It was supported by voluntary contributions to the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons, which was set up in accordance with Conference decision C-16/DEC.13 (dated 2 December 2011), including the generous donation from Dr Robert Mathews of Australia of the prize money he received as one of the inaugural winners of the OPCW-The Hague Award in 2014.
31. The OPCW Laboratory launched its multipurpose training facility in April and has, since that time, hosted one external and three internal training courses. I encourage States Parties to send their experts to participate in courses provided at this facility, with a view to expanding our current network of 19 designated laboratories. We have seen a sharp increase in our requests for analysis in recent years, and we are looking into what more can be done in relation to analysis of biomedical samples. The most recent biomedical sample analysis exercise was concluded this summer, with 25 participating laboratories from 21 Member States. Next year, the Secretariat intends to transform these exercises into proficiency tests to allow the designation of such laboratories for off-site analysis.
32. The Secretariat has continued to pursue enhanced engagement with industry—notably, by establishing the Chemical Industry Coordination Group (CICG) with representatives of the International Council of Chemical Associations. The CICG held its first meeting on 3 November, with a further meeting planned for the first quarter of 2016. I am pleased to welcome senior chemical industry representatives at this session of the Conference. I note, in this regard, that this year's agenda includes for the first time an item on engagement with chemical industry and the scientific community.
33. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) held its Twenty-Second Session in June and endorsed the final report of its temporary working group (TWG) on technological changes that could potentially benefit verification activities under the Convention. I have reviewed this report and proposed a plan of action to implement its recommendations (EC-80/DG.7, dated 28 August 2015). I wish to thank the SAB Chairperson, Dr Christopher Timperley of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for his efforts to communicate the findings of the TWG and engage with States Parties on its recommendations.
34. I take this opportunity to thank all members of the SAB who have completed their terms in 2015 and look forward to welcoming new SAB members in 2016. I hope that States Parties will respond favourably to my request for voluntary contributions to the SAB Trust Fund (S/1237/2015, dated 22 January 2015).
35. Our collaboration with the scientific community continued in 2015, with the Secretariat participating in events organised by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), the Malta Conference, and the American Chemical

Society, among others. Secretariat staff have also further expanded their networks through presentations at conferences, publications in scientific journals, and engagement in various scientific education initiatives. I would like to acknowledge the presence of the President of IUPAC at this session of the Conference.

36. Education and outreach remains an area of priority focus for the Secretariat. You have before you a draft decision on the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (C-20/DEC/CRP.4, dated 22 October 2015). The new Advisory Board will be a key element in an expanded and strengthened OPCW education and outreach programme, working not only with the Secretariat but with all States Parties to better connect with students, policy-makers, and other stakeholders. The Board will help to develop and disseminate education and outreach programmes and materials, as well as to set strategic directions for this important area of our work. The nomination process for the Board's members is now open, and I call on States Parties to put forward the names of suitable candidates.
37. You will recall that at last year's session, the Conference endorsed an initiative by Germany to pursue work on an ethical code for chemistry professionals under the norms of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Technical Secretariat facilitated two workshops in support of this initiative—in March and September—chaired by Professor Alejandra Suárez of Argentina and attended by chemistry professionals from more than 20 States Parties. The workshops produced elements and principles for an ethical code, known as The Hague Ethical Guidelines. The guidelines are available on the OPCW public website, and I encourage all delegations to share them with educational and scientific institutions in their countries.
38. You will also recall that earlier this year, we marked 100 years since the first large-scale use of chemical weapons. In a historic gathering on 21 April in Ieper, Belgium, the Technical Secretariat arranged a commemorative gathering of States Parties, which many of you attended. The Ieper Declaration, issued at that gathering, reaffirmed our commitment to the noble goals enshrined in the Chemical Weapons Convention. The declaration demonstrates the strong political will of our States Parties to ensure the success and effectiveness of the Convention well into the future. I hope that we can draw inspiration from it in our ongoing work.
39. We have also looked to future challenges more systematically, as discussion on post-destruction transition intensified over the past year, including through a retreat with Permanent Representatives in October. I hope that discussion on this vital theme can continue, including in States Parties' capitals, to encompass consideration of all options for ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and efficiency of our Organisation.
40. The resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention was adopted by the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 6 November. The General Assembly will consider this resolution on 7 December. As in previous years, the resolution was introduced by the delegation of Poland, whose efforts I would like to acknowledge here.
41. As States Parties were briefed in November, the Programme and Budget for 2015 (C-19/DEC.4, dated 3 December 2014) has faced severe pressure as a result of the unbudgeted cost of the Fact-Finding Mission and a significant increase in staff costs

that have resulted from a variety of unforeseeable factors. In response, the Secretariat has been implementing a series of mitigating measures, such as the transfer of resources from a number of programmes, including Chapter Two programmes, to meet the projected Inspections Programme funding shortfall. These measures have reduced the risk of an overall OPCW budget deficit, but the possibility remains that the Inspections Programme—which remains core business for the OPCW—will run over budget in 2015. The provisional budgetary figures will be known at the end of January 2016 and the final budget position at the end of that year, once all unliquidated obligations have been cleared or cancelled.

42. At the same time, as a result of the late payment of assessed contributions and delay in the reimbursement of costs related to inspections under Articles IV and V of the Convention, the cash position of the Organisation is under significant pressure. To provide the necessary short-term liquidity to the Organisation, we have made use of the Working Capital Fund for the first time in the history of the OPCW. This will provide a temporary cash buffer to enable operational activities to continue over the immediate term. However, the only viable long-term solution is for States Parties to pay outstanding amounts due to the Organisation—at the earliest and in full. I shall continue to update States Parties on both the budgetary and cash-flow situation over the coming months.
43. The Secretariat has continued implementation of the enterprise-resource-planning (ERP) system with the support of a special fund established for this purpose, totalling EUR 7,909,063. As at 1 November 2015, EUR 375,970 had been committed against this fund. A core project team has been established for the duration of the project, and project governance based upon the Prince2 methodology is in place.
44. The next major milestone will be the recommendation of an ERP solution. Upon receipt of vendors' submissions, technical and commercial evaluations will be conducted to determine a solution with the best off-the-shelf functionality and the lowest total cost of ownership. The Secretariat anticipates that an implementation partner will be identified early in 2016, with the implementation phase to start thereafter.
45. I look forward today, at the end of our deliberations, to presenting with Ms van Engelshoven, the Deputy Mayor of The Hague, the second annual OPCW-The Hague Award to Dr Alastair Hay of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Professor Mahdi Balali-Mood of the Islamic Republic of Iran. As you will recall, this award was established as a way of preserving the legacy of the awarding of the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize to the OPCW, with generous contributions also from the City of The Hague. I hope you will all join us in honouring this year's awardees.
46. Finally, the Conference at this session will consider a draft decision on establishing, from 2016, an OPCW Day on 29 April—the anniversary of the Convention's entry into force (C-20/DEC/CRP.1, dated 1 September 2015). In light of the high profile this Organisation has enjoyed over recent years, and as we approach our twentieth anniversary in 2017, it is only fitting that we celebrate our achievements and focus attention on the challenges ahead. A task force has been established within the Secretariat to develop a programme of events for the first OPCW Day, on which subject I circulated a Note last week (S/1330/2015, dated 25 November 2015). To

honour the victims of chemical warfare, it is proposed to have the Remembrance Day on 30 November. It can be marked every year on the first day of the regular session of the Conference of the States Parties from 2016, drawing on participation by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including victim-assistance associations.

47. Mr Chairperson, my report to the Conference at its Twentieth Session is detailed. The full text of my statement will be circulated to delegations as an official document of this session.

### **Chemical demilitarisation and verification**

48. As at 31 October 2015, a total of 70,494 MTs of Category 1 chemical weapons had been declared by the possessor States Parties. As I have mentioned, of this amount, 64,437 MTs, or 91.4%, of the declared Category 1 chemical weapons had been destroyed under verification by the Secretariat. The aggregate amount destroyed includes 2,914 MTs that have been withdrawn from Category 1 chemical weapons stockpiles pursuant to Article VI of the Convention and subparagraph 2(d) of Part VI of the Verification Annex for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.
49. The destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons stockpiles declared by A State Party, Albania, India, Libya, and the Syrian Arab Republic has been completed. In total, 2,032 MTs of Category 2 chemical weapons have been declared by the possessor States Parties. The aggregate amount of Category 2 chemical weapons destroyed as at 31 October 2015 is 1,283 MTs, or 63.1%, of the total amount declared. Albania, India, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America have completed the destruction of all their declared Category 2 chemical weapons, whereas 47.8% and 95.3% of the amount declared by Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, respectively, have been destroyed.
50. As for Category 3 chemical weapons, A State Party, India, Libya, the Russian Federation, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the United States of America have previously completed the destruction of these weapons.

### United States of America

51. The United States of America has destroyed 24,925 MTs, or 89.8%, of the total declared amount of Category 1 chemical weapons. According to its detailed plan for the destruction of chemical weapons remaining after 29 April 2012 (EC-68/NAT.2, dated 13 April 2012), the United States of America plans to complete the destruction of its remaining chemical weapons by September 2023. In total, 11 CWDFs in this State Party have completed operations.
52. The United States of America began destruction of problematic munitions at the explosive destruction system (EDS) installed at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP) in March 2015 under the verification of the Technical Secretariat. As at 31 October 2015, a total of 1,054 kg of chemical agent, contained in mortar cartridges and projectiles, was destroyed using this system.
53. The United States of America informed the Technical Secretariat that the start of main plant destruction operations at the PCAPP may be delayed by up to six months, to June 2016. The Secretariat has been informed that measures are being undertaken to

accelerate the start of operations. The United States of America has also informed the Secretariat that it has completed 100% of the construction of the PCAPP, and that systemisation stood at 88% as at 31 October 2015.

54. The United States of America also informed the Secretariat that a static detonation chamber would assist with problematic munitions at Blue Grass in Kentucky in 2017. The Technical Secretariat anticipates conducting an initial visit to this facility in 2016. The Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) Explosive Destruction Technology (EDT) has reached 56% of the construction, and systemisation has reached 22%. The main facility at Blue Grass is expected to start destruction in April 2020. The BGCAPP has completed 98% of construction and 38% of systemisation.
55. At the invitation of the United States of America, a delegation of the Executive Council visited Pueblo, Colorado from 22 to 27 March and had the opportunity to see both the PCAPP and the EDS, pursuant to the decision of the Conference on the final extended deadline (C-16/DEC.11, dated 1 December 2011).

#### Russian Federation

56. All five CWDFs in the Russian Federation were operational in 2015, with four of these ceasing operations in the course of the year. As at 31 October 2015, the total amount of Category 1 chemical weapons verified as destroyed was 36,756 MTs, or 92%, of the total amount declared. According to the addendum to its detailed plan for the destruction of chemical weapons remaining after 29 April 2012 (EC-68/P/NAT.1/Add.1, dated 6 October 2014), the Russian Federation plans to destroy the remaining amount of 3,200 MTs, or 56%, of Category 1 chemical weapons, located at the Kizner facility, by December 2020.

#### Libya

57. Libya has continued to demonstrate its commitment to destroying its remaining chemical weapons. Following destruction of all of its Category 1 and 3 chemical weapons, Libya has destroyed 669.813 MTs, or 47.78%, of its declared stockpiles of Category 2 chemical weapons (C-20/NAT.3\*, dated 19 November 2015).
58. In view of the current situation in Libya, as well as the safety hazard posed by the continued storage of the remaining chemicals, Libya developed a plan to allow it to fulfil its obligations regarding the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons in a phased approach. The plan provides for the destruction of some of the chemicals in a relatively short time frame and, at the same time, provides for continued storage of the remaining chemicals until their destruction, without posing any safety or environmental risks.
59. As part of the implementation of this plan, on 13 June 2015, Libya completed the destruction of 114.103 MTs of isopropanol at the Ruwagha site. Given the security situation in Libya, the Secretariat and Libya have agreed on a set of remote post-destruction verification measures, which have been implemented. The United States of America and Canada have assisted Libya with obtaining suitable containers for the reloading of some of the remaining chemicals that are currently stored in deteriorating containers to guarantee their safe storage pending destruction. Efforts

continue to ensure the disposal of the remaining chemicals in line with the concept plan developed by Libya and the planned destruction completion date of December 2016.

#### Iraq

60. Iraq has continued to keep the Secretariat and Member States informed of all steps being taken towards the assessment and destruction of its declared stockpiles of chemical weapons. Due to the ongoing security situation, no further action has been taken.

#### Old and abandoned chemical weapons

61. The destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China continued this year at the Haerbaling Abandoned Chemical Weapons Test Destruction Facility (ACW-TDF) and the mobile destruction facilities (MDFs) located in Shijiazhuang and Wuhan. Since operations started at Haerbaling in December 2014, the Secretariat has verified the destruction of a total of 483 abandoned chemical weapon (ACW) items of the 994 that have been destroyed to date. Furthermore, at the Shijiazhuang MDF a total of 2,214 ACW items had been verified as destroyed at this location, as at 13 November of this year. Wuhan completed destruction operations in May 2015, and the Technical Secretariat verified the destruction of 264 items of ACWs. These quantities are in addition to the 35,681 items of ACWs previously destroyed at the Nanjing MDF.
62. In the last 12 months, nine inspections of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China have been conducted at eight locations in China. This figure includes the verification of destruction operations at Haerbaling and Shijiazhuang and verification at the Shijiazhuang trust warehouse of those items consolidated from six surrounding temporary warehouses for the purpose of destruction. In addition, the Technical Secretariat attended two excavation and recovery operations, firstly at Tianjin in January and then at the test recovery site in Jiamusi in October.
63. Six inspections of old chemical weapons were conducted in six States Parties, namely, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. While the destruction operations have made considerable progress, recoveries of significant quantities of old chemical weapons continue to be made.

#### Chemical weapons production facilities

64. The total number of CWPFs has remained at 97 in 14 States Parties. Of those, 67 have been destroyed and 23 have been converted for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. Twelve 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.
65. As noted already, 11 of 12 remaining CWPFs in the Syrian Arab Republic have been destroyed in accordance with the approved combined plan for destruction and verification. In 2015, the Technical Secretariat conducted systematic inspections at

two converted CWPFs in the Russian Federation. Following the decision by the Executive Council at its Sixty-Seventh Session (EC-67/DEC.7, dated 16 February 2012) on the nature of continued verification measures at converted CWPFs 10 years after certification of their conversion, the Secretariat inspected three such CWPFs in the Russian Federation in 2015.

#### Declarations

66. As at 2 November, a total of 70,494 MTs of Category 1 chemical weapons and 2,032 MTs of Category 2 chemical weapons had been declared by possessor States. There have been no changes regarding the remaining possessor States Parties aside from Iraq, which submitted a national paper (EC-79/P/NAT.5, dated 7 July 2015) informing the Secretariat about developments in the implementation of the Al-Muthanna Bunkers Decommissioning Project. This information covers the current status of the project and emergency plan to eliminate the risk associated with Bunker 13.
67. In June 2015, the Syrian Arab Republic reported the destruction of declared ACWs.
68. The Secretariat is still awaiting the submission of detailed plans of one State Party for the destruction of its CWPFs, as well as the annual detailed plan for the destruction of chemical weapons for 2016 by another State Party.
69. As at 9 November, out of 192 States Parties, two States Parties had yet to submit their initial declarations, both under Article III and under Article VI, and one State Party had yet to submit its partial initial declaration under Article VI of the Convention. The Secretariat will continue to work with these States Parties on submission of their outstanding initial declarations.
70. The timeliness of submission of annual declarations on past activities (ADPAs) has improved over the last two years, with a notable improvement for the 2014 ADPA, with 75 States Parties (84%) submitting the ADPA for 2014 on time as compared to 71 or (77%) in 2013.
71. Another improvement is noted in the annual declarations on anticipated activities (ADAA). For Schedule 1 facilities, 21 States Parties (91%) submitted ADAA for 2016 on time, as compared to 18 States Parties (82%) last year. Regarding Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 declarations, 44 States Parties (98%) submitted their ADAA for 2016 on time, as compared to 38 States Parties (86%) for the ADAA for 2015. I commend States Parties for this improvement and encourage them to maintain this high level of timely and accurate declarations to the Secretariat.

#### Transfer discrepancies related to the import and export of Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 chemicals

72. In order to resolve the long outstanding issue of transfer discrepancies, a number of suggested approaches have been implemented by the Secretariat, which will evaluate their impact. I encourage States Parties involved in transfer discrepancies to work closely with the Secretariat to reconcile these discrepancies.

### Survey on the implementation of Schedule 2A/2A\* low-concentration guidelines

73. In September, the Secretariat released the fifth survey on the implementation of Schedule 2A/2A\* low-concentration guidelines (S/1310/2015, dated 15 September 2015) in order to report on the progress of the implementation of decision C-14/DEC.4 (dated 2 December 2009) in the Verification Implementation Report (VIR) for 2015. As at 9 November, 39 out of 58 States Parties had already implemented the decision. I encourage all States Parties that have not yet informed the Secretariat of the status of implementation of the decision to complete the fifth survey and to submit the results to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

### Electronic processing

74. The electronic processing of declarations continues to demonstrate positive developments. For ADPA 2014, a total of 92% of the declared plant sites were declared electronically. For that year, seven States Parties used the electronic declaration tool for National Authorities (EDNA) for the first time. In October, the Secretariat released a new version (3.2.1) of the electronic declaration tool and will continue to improve this mechanism to respond to the needs of the National Authorities and the Secretariat.

### Cooperation with the World Customs Organization

75. The Technical Secretariat continues its cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO) for the inclusion of unique identifiers of the most traded scheduled chemicals in the international Harmonized System Codes, which will have a significant impact on facilitating the customs authorities in the identification of internationally traded Scheduled chemicals. The 2017 edition of the Harmonized System will already include 33 most traded scheduled chemicals. Currently, the Secretariat is working to include another 16 scheduled chemicals in the 2022 edition of the Harmonized System.

### Inspectorate training

76. Inspectorate training in 2015 has focused on maintaining the mandatory qualifications required within the OPCW's quality system for the conduct of routine inspection activities, as well as on preparing inspectors to perform contingency operations, such as challenge inspections, investigations of alleged use, and fact-finding missions.
77. A new group of inspectors (Group N), comprising 16 inspectors, hired in November 2014, concluded their speciality training programme, consisting of a 13-week programme made up of both general and specialist modules, on 13 February 2015. Another group of inspectors (Group O), comprising 12 inspectors, will come on board in January 2016 and will be trained to be ready for deployment at the beginning of May 2016.
78. The 2015 Inspectorate Training Programme (ITP) started on 5 January and is expected to run until 16 December. The Inspectorate Division will complete 2,456 equivalent training days within the ITP subprogramme. Delivery of training by inspectors required 590 equivalent training days. The programme (excluding new

inspector training) consisted of 48 individual training courses, with a total of 45 calendar weeks involving training.

### **Industry verification**

79. In 2015 the Secretariat is scheduled to carry out 241 Article VI inspections. By mid-December, all 241 inspections in 43 States Parties, including 11 with sampling and analysis, are scheduled to be completed.
80. A State Party that has been receiving a large number of inspections this year has agreed to allow sequential inspections consisting of two consecutive inspections in one week, which resulted in large savings in inspector time and travel costs. I am happy to report that throughout 2015, sequential inspections have been utilised in over 48% of Article VI inspections. This involved 118 inspections conducted as 59 sequential ones.
81. The Secretariat welcomes inputs by States Parties on improvements in the verification process through consultations within the Industry Cluster and meetings of National Authorities, as has been manifested in several papers and decisions this year. A Note by the Secretariat on this subject (S/1272/2015, dated 1 May 2015) addresses very low concentrations of Schedule 1 chemicals produced as by-products in commercial industry, which resulted in the development of a procedure to assure consistency and transparency in the Technical Secretariat's handling of such findings. The procedure was implemented mid-year for all Article VI inspections.
82. The Technical Secretariat continues to provide assistance to States Parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention. The Verification Division provides technical consultations, along with training and research utilising databases on chemical producers to direct attention to possible declarable activities, when requested by any State Party. These activities have resulted in more accurate declarations.
83. Of the 11 sampling and analysis missions mentioned previously, nine were conducted at Schedule 2 facilities, while the additional two were held at Schedule 3 and other chemical production facilities (OCPFs). I wish to thank the representatives of Georgia and Poland for being the first States Parties to receive inspections with sampling and analysis.
84. The revised methodology for selection of OCPFs, as reported in S/1240/2015 (dated 6 February 2015), has continued to show good results in terms of relevance of sites selected for inspection. The methodology takes into account both the number and the relevance of plant sites declared and results in a correlation between the number of declared OCPF sites and the number of inspections in each State Party. This approach continues to result in more inspections at highly relevant sites, as well as in a continued increase in the number of States Parties receiving inspections. The revised selection process allows the Secretariat to better target more relevant OCPF inspections with a broader geographic distribution.

### Technical support from the OPCW Laboratory

85. Our network of partner laboratories available for off-site analysis of samples remains strong, with 19 laboratories from 15 Member States having met the requisite criteria

to become OPCW designated laboratories. Twenty-one laboratories from an additional 18 Member States have participated in the proficiency-testing programme this year and are working to obtain designated status.

86. Nine of our partner laboratories have analysed over 200 samples in support of both the DAT and the deployments of the FFM. I wish to thank the staff of the laboratories and their representatives for their assistance.
87. It should be noted that before we can send samples to a designated laboratory for off-site analysis, we must have a formal agreement in place with the laboratories. To date, we only have agreements in place with half of our designated laboratories. I strongly encourage all Member States that host designated laboratories to assist their laboratories in arranging agreements with the Secretariat.

#### Medium-Term Plan

88. As I have mentioned, on 1 October, a retreat was held for Permanent Representatives to discuss the strategic direction of the OPCW and its mission through the post-destruction phase. Discussion was based on positions advanced in the vision paper prepared by the Secretariat, "The OPCW in 2025: Ensuring a World Free of Chemical Weapons" (S/1252/2015, dated 6 March 2015). The Secretariat also circulated an informal summary of these very useful discussions, identifying several issues of common interest (S/1316/2015, dated 14 October 2015). In addition, the Secretariat has accelerated its work on a revised Medium-Term Plan, based on a single future scenario with clearly defined mid-term goals for the period from 2017 to 2021, which will be published with a view to informing deliberations on the 2017 Programme and Budget.

#### Results-based management

89. Throughout 2015, the Secretariat has focused on three areas in its strengthening of results-based management (RBM) implementation: firstly, RBM principles have been further embedded in the 2016 Programme and Budget; secondly, RBM training has focused on results and accountability frameworks and coaching sessions have addressed the needs of individual units to enhance their implementation of RBM; and, thirdly, we have begun strengthening our monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be better able to report on the achievement of agreed key performance indicators.

#### Education and outreach

90. Education and outreach will continue to play an increasingly important role in the years ahead and in our mission to broaden the OPCW's community of stakeholders, as I have noted in relation to the proposed Advisory Board on Education and Outreach.
91. The Secretariat has also continued this year to increase and deepen its contact with scientific organisations, industry associations, and chemical practitioners in support of its education and outreach goals. Education and outreach is one of the key areas of exchange in the newly formalised cooperation between the OPCW and the International Council of Chemistry Associations, and we continue to work closely with the IUPAC in this area.

## **International cooperation and assistance**

### Implementation support

92. The Secretariat has conducted over 30 global and regional courses and events aimed at strengthening the capacity of National Authorities to fulfil their obligations under the Convention. The Secretariat also provided initial support and advice to Angola and Myanmar, to prepare them for joining the Convention, as well as to States Parties that have not yet established or designated their National Authorities. In this regard, a mock exercise for an industry inspection was organised in June this year for representatives of Angola and Myanmar in cooperation with the National Authority of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
93. The Secretariat continues to assist States Parties in the development and adoption of necessary national legislation. An electronic platform, the Legislative Assistant Support Tool (LAST), has been made available as a means of developing or improving national implementing legislation. Four internship programmes for legal drafters were organised this year to enable States Parties to design the requisite laws and regulations covering the initial measures required under the Convention. Paraguay and Tajikistan successfully adopted their national legislation in 2015, increasing the number of States Parties that have adopted relevant legislation to 147.
94. To further enhance political support for the adoption of Convention-related implementing legislation, the Secretariat conducted the first session of the Influential Visitors Programme in 2015. Parliamentarians and government officials from Uganda visited the OPCW and consulted with OPCW officials on early adoption of Uganda's draft implementing legislation. The visit was followed up by a national awareness-raising workshop for parliamentarians in Uganda.
95. The annual meeting and the regional meetings of National Authorities continue to serve as useful platforms for States Parties to discuss and share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned with regard to the implementation of the Convention.
96. The Seventeenth Annual Meeting for National Authorities was held from 27 to 29 November. Regional meetings of National Authorities were also hosted by Algeria, China, Panama, and Slovenia. The regional meetings in Asia and Africa were followed by meetings on education and outreach, which helped to engage representatives of academic institutions and other stakeholders. In 2016, the Secretariat plans to continue combining National Authorities meetings with education and outreach in all regions.
97. To improve the capabilities of National Authorities, the Secretariat offered two basic courses, a training course on national escorts for inspections, and a course on fulfilling Article VI declaration requirements, which was supported by a financial contribution from Qatar.
98. The Partnership and Mentorship Programme continued to provide a platform for National Authorities to share their experiences in implementing the Convention. Two programmes between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic, and between Brazil and Sao Tome, were successfully implemented this year. The

programme continues to receive increasing interest from States Parties, and will be continued.

99. To improve the capacity of States Parties to enforce the transfers regime effectively, the Secretariat organised regional and subregional training courses for customs officials. In 2015, six training courses were organised in Jamaica, Qatar, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, and Thailand, attended by over 200 participants in total.
100. As mentioned previously, the Secretariat continues its cooperation with the WCO. The joint efforts have proved very useful in conducting courses for customs officials, to which WCO representatives have also contributed. The OPCW also concluded a licencing agreement on placing the Convention-related e-learning modules on the WCO website. Initiated under the Green Customs Initiative, these modules follow the structure of the OPCW training courses for customs officials and can be used for training purposes by individual customs officers and by customs training institutions.
101. In March, in cooperation with the National Authority of the United States of America, the Secretariat organised a workshop entitled “Security, the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and Cooperative Threat Reduction in Africa”, which was held in South Africa. The workshop encouraged participants to develop country action plans specifying the challenges of implementation of the Convention and outlining the necessary steps to overcome them.
102. In November, Qatar hosted a meeting of chemical industry and National Authority representatives, which focused on declaration obligations and the industry verification regime, as well as on strengthening partnerships between the chemical industry and National Authorities.
103. To facilitate on-line submission of nominations made by National Authorities for OPCW-related events, the Secretariat has developed a platform that has been tested in a number of selected activities in 2015, which will be streamlined with further adjustments in 2016. It is expected that the system will help facilitate the timely submission of nominations received from National Authorities and ensure the accuracy of information and data submitted. The National Authorities are encouraged to use the platform.

#### Assistance and protection

104. Increases have been registered this year in the contributions by States Parties to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance and to unilateral offers pursuant to paragraph 7 of Article X of the Convention. Submissions of information by States Parties about their national protective programmes against the use of chemical weapons, however, have been lower than in the previous two years. As at 31 November, 69 States Parties had submitted information about their national protective programmes against the use of chemical weapons. I would like to reiterate the importance of this particular transparency measure for the security regime established under the Convention and strongly encourage States Parties to review the status of their obligations under Article X, particularly those contained in paragraphs 4 and 7.
105. The Technical Secretariat has organised and conducted international and regional assistance-and-protection training courses and capacity-building activities under

Article X jointly with the governments of Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Pakistan, Poland, Qatar, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Switzerland, and Turkey.

106. Following recommendations of the Third Review Conference aimed at making more efficient use of available resources and expertise in the regions and subregions, the Secretariat has continued to implement a tailored approach to training, consisting of a three-component cycle: basic, advanced, exercise. Accordingly, these training cycles were conducted in the GRULAC<sup>2</sup> region and in Asia this year.
107. A full training cycle was completed in the GRULAC region, taking place in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Colombia. A second cycle for the GRULAC region took place in Brazil and Argentina and will finish in Colombia early next year. In Asia, a full training cycle was completed for Russian-speaking participants in Belarus and Kazakhstan. A second cycle, specifically targeting Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Viet Nam was held in China with back-to-back basic and advanced courses and will be completed in early 2016 following an exercise in Indonesia. Another exercise was held in Brazil, as the conclusion to a training cycle for Portuguese-speaking States Parties that consisted of a basic course held in Brazil in 2013 and an advanced course held in Portugal in 2014.
108. In August, the Secretariat conducted the fourth international training course for instructors, which provided advanced training to a new international team of 24 first responders. The course is an integral part of the Secretariat's endeavour to expand the "train the trainer" approach in order to enhance the effectiveness of expert advice provided to States Parties under paragraph 5 of Article X. Sponsored "train the trainer" courses were also conducted in cooperation with Belarus, the Czech Republic, and South Africa.
109. The Secretariat continued to implement and expand its Instructor Development and Exchange Programme aimed at consolidating and maximising the benefit of the "train the trainer" approach. This programme includes exchange of expertise and fostering of best practices that will enhance the response capacity of States Parties, both individually and regionally, and will continue to improve the necessary state of readiness of the Organisation to respond to a request for assistance. Across the Secretariat's capacity-building endeavours, various instructor exchanges were conducted with the aims of harmonising curricula, strengthening training programmes, and enhancing regional assistance-and-protection networks.
110. Under the auspices of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Africa Programme"), two projects were launched with the financial and technical support of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic to support the development of a counter-chemical national and regional protection capability for the East African Community Partner States and the Economic Community of West African States.

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<sup>2</sup> GRULAC = Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Secretariat intends to launch a similar project for States Parties in the Southern African Development Community next year.

111. The first basic course on assistance and protection for Arabic-speaking States Parties was successfully conducted in Algiers, Algeria, in May, providing assistance-and-protection training to 20 participants from 12 Arabic-speaking States Parties from the Middle East and North Africa. The second stage of this training will take place in Qatar in the next few weeks.
112. Operational and procedural issues of regional assistance coordination were addressed during two table-top exercises conducted this year. The first took place in March in Denpasar, Indonesia, and involved 25 experts from 14 States Parties of the Asia region. Participants tested their skills and organisational processes in a scenario involving a major chemical incident.
113. The second table-top exercise was conducted in April with the support of the Peruvian National Authority in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and addressed regional procedures in international assistance and consequence management in the case of a major chemical incident. The exercise was part of a subregional assistance-and-protection project for Central America and Mexico. Participants also received information on regional coordination activities being undertaken by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office in Panama City, Panama, and on several subregional disaster-coordination mechanisms in that geographical area.
114. The Secretariat has continued to broaden its capacity-building efforts to different target groups requiring specialised training. In this context, the first assistance-and-protection course for police first responders was organised in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in September with the generous financial support of New Zealand and Greece. Twenty-five participants from 15 States Parties were provided with knowledge and skills in relation to first response to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The course was the first OPCW effort to address the unique circumstances which police officers face in responding to an incident involving the use of chemical weapons or other release of toxic chemicals.
115. Medical response to mitigate the impact of chemical attacks and accidental releases of toxic chemicals remains a priority in the area of capacity building in assistance and protection. The second course on medical aspects of assistance and protection for 20 participants from the medical services of 19 States Parties was conducted in Kaunas, Lithuania, in June.
116. The fifteenth annual workshop to coordinate assistance and protection under Article X of the Convention was jointly organised with the National Authority of Turkey in July. With participation of States Parties from all regions, as well as representatives of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the workshop focused on general aspects of Article X implementation, capacity building, and regional coordination issues. Recommendations were drawn to improve strategies for the full implementation of Article X of the Convention.
117. In summary, 34 assistance-and-protection capacity-building activities conducted by the Secretariat during 2015 have allowed the OPCW to develop and enhance the skills of 458 individuals from States Parties of all regions in basic, advanced, laboratory,

medical, and refresher levels of training, as well in exercises and other similar activities.

118. As a part of strengthening capacity to respond to a request for assistance under Article X of the Convention, the Secretariat conducted training for potential members of the Assistance Coordination and Assessment Team (ACAT). Twelve Technical Secretariat representatives participated in the training, the main aim of which was to provide participants with in-depth understanding of key issues they are likely to face when on ACAT missions, such as emergency management, planning, deployment, and coordination with other international stakeholders, as well as media handling and crisis communications.
119. Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude once again to all States Parties and training institutions that supported assistance-and-protection activities this year, including those that contributed with voluntary funds to the realisation of additional activities in the area of assistance and protection.

#### International cooperation

120. Since the last session of the Conference, the Secretariat has organised 19 capacity-building events and has supported 15 conferences and 32 research activities in the area of Article XI of the Convention. The capacity-building activities were hosted by 14 Member States: Argentina, Finland, Germany, India, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, and Viet Nam, and were attended by over 440 participants from 99 Member States. The activities were supported by the regular budget and by voluntary contributions from the European Union, Finland, Germany, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, and the United States of America.
121. The sixteenth edition of the Associate Programme was successfully conducted from 23 July to 2 October, attended by 31 participants from 29 Member States: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Ghana, Hungary, India, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Hungary and Saudi Arabia were represented for the first time this year.
122. I wish to express my appreciation for the continuous support offered to this programme by various partners, including the World Customs Organization, the European Chemical Industry Council, the European Association of Chemical Distributors, the European Chemicals Agency, the Dutch customs authorities, the Port of Rotterdam, the University of Surrey, the Dutch Chemical Industry Association (VNCI), and the Technical University of Delft.
123. Nine analytical skills development courses were held in seven Member States this year: three courses in Finland and one course in South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Malaysia and Tunisia, attended by 131 participants from 60 Member States.
124. The OPCW and the Institute of Industrial Organic Chemistry (Instytut Przemysłu Organicznego (IPO)) organised the fourth course for analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services in Warsaw, Poland, from 13 to 17 April.

Participants from 13 Member States: Algeria, Burundi, China, Costa Rica, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Serbia, Sudan, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates attended the course. The training was designed to enhance the knowledge of qualified analytical chemists and scientists on the role of customs-service laboratories in implementation of Article XI of the Convention and to promote chemical safety in laboratories.

125. Under the Africa Programme, in the area of chemical analysis, the seventh analytical chemistry course took place at Protechnik Laboratories in Pretoria, South Africa. The course was conducted from 4 to 15 May. Twenty-four African chemistry professionals from 17 countries attended and received training in analysis, synthesis, and quality control of chemicals related to the Convention. Participants from Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe successfully completed the course.
126. The fifth course on the analysis of chemicals in the framework of OPCW proficiency testing, specially arranged in Spanish for chemistry practitioners from the GRULAC region, was held in Madrid, Spain, from 18 to 29 May. The course was attended by 16 participants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Spain, and Uruguay. The successful organisation of this course, with the joint efforts of the Secretariat, the National Authority of Spain, and the Laboratorio de Verificación para las Armas Químicas, Instituto Tecnológico La Marañosa, served to promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of chemistry.
127. In collaboration with Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), the OPCW held its first analytical skills development course in Sweden from 24 August to 4 September, which hosted qualified analytical chemists from 19 countries: Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.
128. In cooperation with the Tunisian National Institute for Research and Physical-Chemical Analysis (INRAP) Laboratories, the Secretariat organised the third edition of the analytical-skills-development course for French-speaking Member States from Africa, held from 26 October to 6 November. The course accommodated 13 chemistry professionals from industry, government, and academia from 11 Member States, namely, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal, and Tunisia.
129. In continuation of our cooperation with the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), three courses have taken place this year. The first course, on the enhancement of laboratory skills in laboratory quality management, was held from 7 to 18 September, and hosted six participants from Burundi, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Moldova, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe. The second course, on the enhancement of laboratory skills in quantitative mass spectrometry, took place from 7 to 18 September, with participation of seven qualified analytical chemists from Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, the Philippines, Serbia, Sri Lanka, and the

- United Republic of Tanzania. The third course, funded under the European Union Council Decision 2014, was on the subject of analytical skills development, and took place from 9 to 20 November. The course was attended by 20 participants from 20 Member States: Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Serbia, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.
130. Under the Industry-Outreach Programme, six courses were hosted by five Member States: Germany, India, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, and Viet Nam, benefitting 168 participants from 48 Member States.
  131. The OPCW supported an international conference on chemical safety and security in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India, on 22 and 23 January. The conference was part of the 2015 Vibrant Gujarat event and resulted in a proposal to establish an international centre on chemical safety and security.
  132. A seminar on the Convention and the management of chemical safety and security was organised under the auspices of the Doha Regional Centre for CBRN Training, in cooperation with the National Authority of Qatar and funded through a voluntary contribution from the Government of Qatar. The seminar took place in Doha from 22 to 24 February and was attended by 70 participants from 24 Member States representing the chemical industry, chemical industry associations, and National Authorities, as well as government officials from the region.
  133. A workshop on chemical security and safety for Member States that are also members of the South Asian Association for the Regional Cooperation and the Association of South East Asian Nations was conducted in Hanoi, Viet Nam, from 19 to 21 May to discuss issues of safety and security management. The workshop was attended by 35 participants from 14 Member States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
  134. The fourth workshop on the peaceful development and use of chemistry for Member States of the OPCW in the Asia region was organised with the support of a voluntary contribution from the Government of the Republic of Korea and was held from 20 to 22 October in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. The workshop was attended by 35 participants from 21 States Parties, namely: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cyprus, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Viet Nam.
  135. With the support of the Federal Foreign Office of the Government of Germany, the OPCW, in cooperation with the Bergische Universität Wuppertal, organised two courses on chemical safety management. The first course was for Member States in the Asia and GRULAC regions and was held from 13 to 17 April. A total of 11 qualified participants from 11 Member States, namely, Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, China, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, and Sri Lanka, successfully completed the course. The second course was for African Member States and was held from 12 to 16 October. Thirteen participants attended the course from 11 Member States, namely, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia,

Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

136. The Secretariat participated in the subregional workshop for Central Asia on industrial accidents prevention, organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 26 to 28 May.
137. In order to facilitate the exchange of scientific and technical information in relation to peaceful uses of chemistry, the Secretariat supported 53 participants from 36 Member States to attend 15 conferences in Argentina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, and Switzerland.
138. Since the last session of the Conference, 14 fellowships have been carried out by scientists from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Lesotho, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Serbia, and the United Republic of Tanzania at universities in Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Finland, Italy, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.
139. The OPCW has continued to provide funding to research projects in peaceful applications of chemistry and to collaborate with the International Foundation for Science (IFS). In the period under review, eight research projects have received direct funding and 12 have been co-funded with the IFS. These projects are undertaken by nationals of the following Member States: Brazil, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, Tunisia, and Viet Nam.
140. With regard to laboratory assistance, the Secretariat conducted two courses attended by 25 participants from 15 Member States this year.
141. The OPCW launched a new international training course at the newly built training facility in Rijswijk. This is the first OPCW programme to provide in-depth customised training on aspects related to participation in the OPCW proficiency tests and is aimed at expanding the global network of designated laboratories that can perform analysis of samples under the OPCW's verification regime. The first training programme was conducted from 18 to 22 May, with the participation of six laboratory specialists from Brazil and South Africa.
142. A course for Member States in the GRULAC region on chemical safety and security management in laboratories was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 15 to 19 June. The course, organised by the National Authority of Argentina with the support of the OPCW, was intended for the personnel of chemical, physical, microbiological and other laboratories to gain knowledge about safety and security aspects. Nineteen participants attended the course, from Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

#### **Universality and external relations**

143. The Conference has before it the "Annual Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention during the Period from 16 August 2014 to 15 August 2015" (EC-80/DG.11 C-20/DG.9, dated

- 9 September 2015). I have noted already that the OPCW welcomed two new members this year, Myanmar and Angola. As in previous years, the Secretariat invited representatives of States not Party to participate in activities conducted by the OPCW and provided sponsorships for their participation.
144. Since the last session of the Conference, the former Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Asirwatham, and Ambassador Rao, in his capacity as our new Deputy Director-General, and I have had the opportunity to visit several countries and to attend meetings and conferences relevant to the implementation of the Convention.
  145. I visited the Czech Republic, Japan, Spain, the United States of America, Algeria, China, Kazakhstan, Slovenia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, India, Portugal, Croatia, Germany, the Russian Federation, and Pakistan. In the course of these visits, I had the opportunity to engage with senior government officials, academic institutions, scientific research institutions, think tanks, and media, as well as representatives of chemical industry and other stakeholders. On a number of occasions, I also had an opportunity to address think tanks and university audiences about the mission of the OPCW. In the Russian Federation, I attended the closure of the Maradykovsky CWDF; in Pakistan, I inaugurated the Regional CWC Assistance and Protection Centre.
  146. In the last 12 months we have received a number of high-level guests at OPCW Headquarters, notably: Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden, the Federal Minister for Defence and Sports of Austria, H.E. Mr Gerald Klug; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Libya, H.E. Mr Mohammed al-Dairi; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, H.E. Mr Manuel González Sanz; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, H.E. Mr Edgars Rinkēvičs; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, H.E. Mr Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, H.E. Dr Lubomír Zaorálek; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, H.E. Mr Wunna Maung Lwin; the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, H.E. Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali; the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, H.E. Ms Federica Mogherini; the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ms Angela Kane; the Minister of State for Security Policy and International Cooperation of Hungary, H.E. Dr István Mikola; and the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, the Right Honourable Ms Rebecca Kadaga.
  147. In October, the Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Rao, visited the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where he participated in an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament in the framework of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly at its 70th session. Ambassador Rao also met with the Under-Secretary-General and Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr Kim Won-soo, and the Under-Secretary-General and Head of the Department for Field Support, Mr Atul Khare, and called on the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations. The Deputy Director-General hosted a briefing in Brussels in November for Permanent Representations to the OPCW who

are not based in The Hague. Also in November, the Deputy Director-General represented the OPCW at the 2015 Remembrance Armistice Day in Ieper, Belgium, and at the closure ceremony of the Shchuchye CWDF in the Russian Federation.

148. In March, the former Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Asirwatham, conducted a briefing in Brussels for Permanent Representations to the OPCW who are not based in The Hague. Since the last session of the Conference, Ambassador Asirwatham paid official visits to Sri Lanka and China. In April, she delivered keynote addresses at a conference in Ieper, marking the centenary of the first use of chemical weapons, and at the Royal Higher Institute for Defence in Brussels.
149. The Asser Institute's Summer Programme on Weapons of Mass Destruction Disarmament and Non-proliferation successfully concluded on 4 September, with 18 participants benefitting from this week-long course supported by the OPCW.
150. On 29 September, the OPCW hosted the fifteenth induction workshop for diplomatic personnel involved in the work of the OPCW. This year's edition was attended by over 60 delegates, including 12 ambassadors. A representative of Egypt also participated in the workshop.
151. On 7 October, the OPCW welcomed the United Nations Disarmament Fellows, with 25 fellows participating in the programme this year.
152. Throughout the year, the Secretariat has continued to receive visiting groups for briefings at OPCW Headquarters. I have had the pleasure to address some of these groups. Over the past year, the Secretariat has hosted over 80 visiting groups and delivered briefings and presentations to diplomatic groups, scientists, think tank members, NGOs, government and international organisations' representatives, students, and researchers, as well as other members of the public who have shown a keen interest in our work.

#### Media and public affairs

153. In line with the recommendation by the Third Review Conference to improve interaction with civil society organisations engaged in issues relevant to the Convention, the OPCW continues to attract high levels of participation by NGOs in the annual session of the Conference of the States Parties. Fifty-two NGOs were approved to participate in this Twentieth Session, which will include a special plenary sitting for NGOs to address delegates, and a number of NGO side events.
154. The official OPCW website continues to draw significant levels of traffic, with over 375,000 users visiting the website in 2015 in the period leading up to 24 November. Plans are under way to re-design the website in 2016. Our social media channels continue to grow as well, with our Twitter audience reaching over 10,000 and our Facebook page not far behind. This year, new analytics tools were introduced to better understand our social media audiences, which will enable us to target our campaigns more closely in the future.
155. As part of the preparations for the centenary, and throughout the year, the Technical Secretariat has continued to enhance and disseminate audio/visual materials to publicly promote the work of the Organisation. These include several new films,

including *Remembering Ieper, Buried Memories*, and *OPCW Nobel Peace Prize 2013: Back Stage*. I encourage you to draw on these valuable resources in your own outreach and awareness-raising efforts.

156. On 21 September, the Organisation opened its doors to the public as part of the annual “International Day” in The Hague and received more than 625 members of the public for briefings and tours at OPCW Headquarters.

#### **Administrative and financial matters**

157. There still remain unpaid outstanding assessed contributions for 2014 and 2015. As at 27 November 2015, the collection level for 2015 assessed contributions stood at 94.7%, compared to 94.4% on the same date last year, whilst the collection level for 2014 assessed contributions stood at 95.5% on 27 November 2015. One State Party has total outstanding assessed contributions of EUR 5.9 million for 2013 to 2015. As it stands, funds that have not been received for the 2015 assessed contributions cannot be utilised. I urge States Parties that have not paid their outstanding contributions to do so at the earliest and in full.
158. The Organisation has incurred significant costs in undertaking inspections under Articles IV and V of the Convention. Although such costs have been invoiced to States Parties in 2014 and 2015, as at 27 November 2015, invoices for EUR 4.1 million remained unpaid by two States Parties. Again, I urge payment of these invoices at the earliest and in full.
159. I have continued to encourage States Parties in arrears that have lost their voting rights to consider entering into multi-year payment plans to settle their outstanding unpaid assessed contributions. Unfortunately, for the past three years no States Parties have submitted to the Technical Secretariat a request for a multi-year payment plan.
160. As for the next financial year, once the Conference approves the proposed Programme and Budget for 2016, the Technical Secretariat will send 192 individual assessment letters to request each State Party to pay its share of the assessed contributions. In view of the urgency of the Organisation’s present cash situation, States Parties are encouraged to pay their 2016 assessed contributions on time and in full, in line with the requirements of the Convention and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Organisation.
161. In July I presented the Draft Programme and Budget for 2016 to States Parties. This document was subsequently discussed in a series of budget facilitations, which were conducted from July through September. The facilitation process resulted in a number of changes, to accommodate views and suggestions made by States Parties. The final outcome represents a budget proposal that has been endorsed by the Executive Council at its Eightieth Session in October. The Draft Programme and Budget for 2016, which totals EUR 67.1 million and represents a 3.2% reduction against the 2015 budget, has subsequently been submitted for the approval of the Conference.
162. This year, the Secretariat has continued to follow the International Public Sector Accounting Standards to record financial transactions and produce financial statements. The External Auditor has issued the latest unqualified audit opinion on the

OPCW's Financial Statements for the period ending 31 December 2014 (EC-80/DG.1 C-20/DG.4, dated 13 July 2015).

163. The Federal Court of Auditors of Germany has finished its assignment as the External Auditor of the OPCW after completing the audit of the 2014 Financial Statements. I wish to thank the External Auditor of Germany for the valuable support and advice provided to the OPCW. I am also pleased to congratulate the National Audit Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on its appointment as External Auditor for the period starting from 2015 (C-19/DEC.6, dated 3 December 2014), and welcome the opportunity to work constructively together over the coming years.

Office of Internal Oversight

164. Over the course of 2015, the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) has carried out five internal audits of activities related to accreditation of both the OPCW Laboratory and the OIO. The OIO has continued its work on the Quality Management System and the Dutch Accreditation Council conducted its annual surveillance visit, during which no non-compliances were identified that required corrective action. The Institute of Internal Auditors is currently finalising its Quality Assurance Review, aimed at verifying that the OIO has worked in accordance with the international auditing standards, as stipulated in OPCW Financial Regulation 12.6. I have continued to closely monitor the status of the implementation of OIO recommendations and remain committed to doing so to ensure continuous improvement.

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