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SINGAPORE

**STATEMENT BY MR ETHAN CHUA
DEPUTY-CHIEF OF MISSION, PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF
SINGAPORE TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairman, Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola-Nicolín,

Singapore warmly congratulates you on your assumption of Chairmanship of the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Singapore is confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will be a resounding success. We would also like to thank Ambassador Vesela Mrđen Korać, for her outstanding work done this past year.

Singapore also welcomes the appointment of Mr Hamid Ali Rao as Deputy Director-General of the OPCW. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Ambassador Grace Asirwatham for her contributions to international chemical disarmament during her term in office. We are confident that the vast experience Mr Rao brings with him will put the OPCW in good stead. Singapore looks forward to working closely with Mr Rao and the Technical Secretariat on the implementation of the Convention.

Mr Chairman,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Singapore joins the other Member States in welcoming the news of Myanmar's ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention and Angola's accession in July and September 2015 respectively. We are heartened by the knowledge that with 192 Member States, the Convention is one of the most successful multilateral agreements.

Their memberships are significant milestones in strengthening the global prohibition against chemical weapons. Singapore reiterates our call for the remaining States which have yet to accede to the Convention to do so without further delay.

On 21 April this year, States Parties to the Convention met in Ieper, Belgium to commemorate the centenary of the first large-scale use of chemical weapons in human history. We came together to honour the memory of and pay tribute to all victims of chemical warfare. We also reiterated our resolve to maintain the Convention's role as a bulwark against chemical weapons, and its contribution to international peace and security.



Singapore joins the international community in condemning the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable under any circumstances, and a violation of the legal norms and standards of the international community.

Singapore is pleased to note that 90% of the declared global stockpiles of chemical weapons have been verifiably destroyed.

While the progress made is laudable, much work remains to be done for the international community to succeed not only in destroying chemical weapons stockpiles, but in preventing their re-emergence. Singapore remains committed to supporting international efforts to achieve this goal.

As a small island state highly dependent on trade, Singapore shares the concerns of the international community on the procurement and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons.

The international community has to remain vigilant to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. We commend the efforts of the OPCW in encouraging an inclusive dialogue within the international community on this matter. Singapore also notes with interest the discussion paper on “Measures to Prevent Hostile Use of Toxic Chemicals by Non-State Actors” circulated by the Technical Secretariat.

One of the key ideas in the discussion paper was the enhancement of domestic efforts throughout the chemical life cycle, from supply chain security to the physical security of premises where toxic chemicals are stored or produced. Singapore adopts a risk-based approach in managing the storage of toxic chemicals. Earlier this year, we strengthened our regulations concerning the storage of the scheduled chemicals. Facilities handling these chemicals are now required to implement security measures to safeguard these chemicals from theft, or sabotage that could release the chemicals into populated areas.

An effective industry verification regime is one of the key pillars of the Convention. Industry declarations, including transfer declarations, are an important aspect of verification activities. The accurate and timely submission of annual declarations is vital to the effectiveness of the verification and implementation regime. Singapore appreciates the efforts by Member States to submit their annual declarations in a timely manner, and encourages Member States to continue submitting their declarations expeditiously.

Singapore is honoured to contribute to the assistance and protection programme under Article X of the Convention. I am pleased to report that in March this year, Singapore successfully hosted the fourth run of the Regional Training Course on Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents, conducted by the Singapore Civil Defence Force. Twenty-five participants from 13 regional Member States participated in this four-day course which included various demonstration and field exercises on mitigation of chemical incidents.

Singapore is also pleased to be given the opportunity to provide our technical assistance in verification and analytical facilities. We are glad to announce the conclusion of a technical agreement with the Technical Secretariat regarding the off-site analysis of samples which took place in May 2015.

The successes of the Convention are significant. While we celebrate our successes, we must not rest on our laurels. We must continue to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and the challenges ahead, as outlined in the Technical Secretariat's paper on "The OPCW in 2025: Ensuring a World Free of Chemical Weapons". Singapore fully supports the efforts of the OPCW and is committed to ensuring the continued successful implementation of the Convention.

Singapore is confident that with the full support of all Member States and the tireless efforts of the OPCW, we will rise to the challenge and achieve our collective goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

Mr Chairman, in closing, I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the conference. Thank you.

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