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Mister Chairman, Director-General, Mister Deputy Director-General, other OPCW Division Directors, OPCW Staff, esteemed Representatives of States Parties, and fellow CWC Coalition representatives, ladies and gentlemen.

I first wish to congratulate the Chairman, Ambassador Israng, for his being selected to lead this 21st Conference of States Parties.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Director-General, Ambassador Uzumcu, and the OPCW for providing the opportunity for NGO presentations during these Conferences.

It was to give voice to these civil societies that I formed the Chemical Weapons Working Group in 1990, consisting of citizens, local governments and NGOs in the U.S., the Pacific, and the Russian Federation. The Working Group focused on public health and environmental protection as a priority in the disposal effort. We also supported the ratification of the Treaty by the United States Senate and urged its passage in 1997.

Now, 19 years later, the landscape has changed dramatically. The majority of possessor States have met their commitments under the Convention while the two Member States with the largest quantity of materials continue steadily on the way to eliminating their stockpiles.

The U.S. has destroyed 90% of its chemical weapons, while there remain two sites moving towards their goal of stockpile destruction: Pueblo, Colorado and Richmond, Kentucky.

My colleague, Ms. Irene Kornelly will brief you on the Colorado situation.

My family and I reside 6 miles South of the Kentucky stockpile. It is in the interest of protecting them and my community that I have been engaged in this issue since 1984.

I am a member of the Kentucky Governor's Advisory Commission and Co-Chair of the Citizens' Advisory Board. Additionally, I am what's known as the "Host Community Liaison," a state mandated position wherein I act as the central point of contact between the United States Military and the local Government.

Mister Chairman,

The Blue Grass Chemical Agent Pilot Plant has achieved much since I last presented here two years ago. We are now 100% complete with construction of the main disposal facility and approaching 100% complete construction with the separate facility that will destroy the Mustard munitions at Blue Grass.

Systemization of the main plant is 65% complete and operations are scheduled to begin in early 2020. It is anticipated that completion of operations will be in late 2023. This will put the United States in compliance with Treaty obligations of 100% destruction of our declared chemical weapons stockpiles.

Recently a decision was made to put the facility planned to be used for Mustard munitions destruction on standby to permit main plant operations to begin sooner. This approach will allow the disposal of the most dangerous of the agents, GB, to be destroyed.

Mister Chairman,

In closing please allow me to express, on behalf of my fellow Kentuckians, our gratitude for the diligence and dedication of all Honorable Representatives to the OPCW. Delegations from this Body have visited us on several occasions and we extend a continuous invitation to do so in the future.

I thank you for your contribution to a more civil and peaceful world. And I kindly ask that this statement be made part of the final CSP record.