



**Statement by Ambassador Lok Bahadur Thapa,
Representative of Nepal to the OPCW
at the Twenty-Second Session of the
Conference of the States Parties
27 November - 1 December 2017, The Hague**

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Director General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Delegation of Nepal, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairperson, on your election as the Chair of this Twenty-Second Session of the Conference of States Parties to the CWC.

I am confident that your outstanding professional skill and leadership would help steer this session to a successful conclusion. I assure you my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to appreciate Chairperson of the Twenty-First Session, Ambassador Dr. Christoph Israng of Germany for his able and dynamic leadership during the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

I am thankful to Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, the Director General, for his comprehensive report while appreciating the efforts of the Director General and his team in Technical Secretariat to promote the role of the Organisation in strengthening and reinforcing the international disarmament regime.

On behalf of my delegation, I congratulate and welcome Ambassador Fernando Arias of Spain as the next Director General.

I align my statement with the statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador of Venezuela on behalf of the NAM State Parties to OPCW and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, apostle of peace and non-violence, strongly believes that the world deserves to remain peaceful without any threat of weapons of mass destruction.

Indeed, the principles of peace and non-violence have always remained the cornerstone of Nepal's foreign and disarmament policies.

We believe that the existence and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, remains a major threat to global peace and security.

Nepal is committed to its long standing principled position of working towards achieving general and complete disarmament of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction around the globe.

We are steadfast in denouncing the production, stockpiling and proliferation of such weapons.

We are absolutely against the use of chemical weapons by any state or non state actors anywhere under any pretext or circumstances.

More specifically, I wish to highlight here that my country stands for complete elimination of chemical weapons from the world for once and for all. We are strongly in favour of the destruction of remaining stockpiles anywhere in the world.

We view that the CWC is a unique and non-discriminatory international disarmament instrument. The full and effective implementation of the Convention will significantly contribute to achieving the general disarmament goals.

We commend the efforts of the Organisation towards achieving universality of the Convention. It is highly encouraging that 192 states are already parties to the Convention.

This involvement of 98% of the global population within the regime is an indication of the desire of the international community for a chemical weapons-free peaceful world.

We appeal to the remaining countries to join in the Convention and request the Organisation and all the states parties to reorient their efforts to accommodate those countries within the regime.

We have come a long way since the entry into force of this Convention.

Yet, our efforts to free the world from the use of chemical weapons still remain unfinished and unfulfilled.

We are yet to achieve the full destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles.

Indeed, it is incumbent upon us to work together for ensuring no re-emergence of chemical weapons anywhere in the world under any pretext.

In view of growing acts and threats of international terrorism, we must ensure that chemical weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorists and non-states actors.

Mr. Chairperson,

As one of the party to the CWC, Nepal is faithfully engaged in the implementation of the Convention at the national level.

A National Authority has been established under the convenorship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the national implementation of the Convention.

Nepal has already adopted and enacted the Criminal Offence Act this year. The Act has criminalised the manufacture, production, buying, selling, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling, possession, trade, import or export of nuclear, chemical, biological (bacteriological) or toxic weapons. 'Chemical weapons' is defined as per the CWC. The Act also provisions the penalties and punishment for any person who is convicted on the offence under the section. Nepal has, thus, partially addressed the implementation of the CWC at the national level.

We are fully committed to the implementation of the Convention with enactment of a complete and comprehensive national legislation in place in near future.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nepal does not produce, manufacture, possess, import or export chemical weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction. Our use of chemical materials is limited to medical and other peaceful purposes.

However, we have always extended and will continue to extend our full cooperation and support in international efforts to eliminate the production, use, stockpiling and proliferation of chemical weapons. We fully support the OPCW's activities carried under article XI of the Convention.

We view that more efforts need to be geared up towards promoting the flow of chemical technology, trade of chemicals and exchange of expertise that contribute to the economic and technological development.

This will also help make the Convention more relevant to a large number of states parties like Nepal that possess neither chemical weapons nor any substantial chemical industries.

We have been benefiting from the regional and global capacity building programmes of the OPCW.

We thank OPCW for providing various training opportunities regarding the implementation of the convention as well as safe use and proper management of chemicals.

The exchange of scientific and technical information and strengthening of the analytical skills and technical capabilities of the least developed countries like Nepal is critical.

Mr Chairperson,

We are happy to co-host the Seventh Regional Basic Training Course on Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents for State Parties in Asia in Kathmandu from 9 to 13 April, 2018.

This event, I believe, will be a step forward toward the implementation of the article X of the CWC and for creating the regional network of experts to deal with chemical incidents.

We will be looking forward to an enhanced level of such engagement with OPCW in hosting regional seminars/meetings/workshops organized by OPCW in the days to come.

To conclude, Mr. Chairperson, I am confident that the deliberations of this Session will be meaningful in our pursuit of the goals of chemical weapons free peaceful and secured world.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the conference and posted on OPCW public website.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.