**OPCW**

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## STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

## TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES AT ITS FOURTH SESSION

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates.

1. Let me welcome you all to this Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, an important milestone in the life of our Organisation. I wish to begin by offering my sincere thanks and gratitude to our departing Chairman, Ambassador Young-shik Song, of the Republic of Korea. His able and effective chairmanship has been of great assistance to us all during his term of office. I am particularly grateful for his untiring efforts to improve the level of communication between all delegations and the Secretariat. You, Mr Chairman, are also a highly experienced and able diplomat who will, I am sure, be able to make an equally valuable contribution to our work during your term of office. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the chair and to pledge the full support of my staff and myself during your chairmanship. I also like to acknowledge the presence at our Conference of Ambassador Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva and Secretary-General of the Conference of Disarmament, who is representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan.

2. Whilst only a few short months have elapsed since we last met for a session of the Conference, much has happened during the intervening period. We have already undertaken our five-hundredth inspection. OPCW inspectors have thus far witnessed the destruction of about 3,000 tons of chemical agents, and of more than 700 thousand munitions and containers. I believe that this is a major achievement for an Organisation which began its life just over two years ago. In that short space of time many problems have, of course, arisen, but with the constructive cooperation of Member States solutions can and are being found. Our young organisation is therefore rapidly developing into a mature, fully-fledged international organisation which is outgrowing its initial relatively limited technical scope, and which is now beginning to play the political role in the international forum necessary for it to achieve its ultimate goal of a world free from chemical weapons.

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* Reissued in English for technical reasons.

3. For us to succeed, however, we must also press forward with our parallel task of achieving universal membership of, and compliance with, our Convention. The growth in our membership since the entry into force of the Convention has been impressive. I was able to report to the Conference at its Third Session that 121 States had joined our ranks. At that session of the Conference, the delegation of the United States of America suggested a target of 140 States Parties for this Fourth Session of the Conference. As you are aware, whilst we have made further progress in this area, we are currently well short of this target. The staff of the Secretariat and I have done our utmost to encourage those States which have not yet done so to join our noble endeavour. At this point I would like to welcome the five States which have recently joined us, namely Estonia, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Holy See, Nigeria, and the Republic of Sudan. In addition to increasing the total number of States Parties to 126, each of these States, by joining the Convention, makes a valuable and unique contribution towards the achievement of our important goal of universality. I once again appeal to all States Parties to exert their influence, either collectively or on an individual basis, to convince the remaining non-States Parties to join us.

4. With the addition of the ratifications by Estonia and the Holy See, the OPCW map of Europe is now almost entirely "green". Within the European region only Andorra, Liechtenstein, San Marino, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia now remain outside the Convention. The very recent ratification by the Federated States of Micronesia will, I hope, send an important message to those of its neighbours in the Pacific region which have yet to take this important step. Nigeria is a key State in Africa - only 31 of the 53 States in this region are currently States Parties to the Convention. I trust that Nigeria's ratification will encourage further progress in this important and under-represented region. The accession of the Republic of Sudan is particularly noteworthy, as the continuing absence of a number of key Middle Eastern States is of increasing concern, not only to me, but also to all States Parties. Let us hope that these States - Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Syria, Somalia and Yemen - will take serious note of the Republic of Sudan's decision to join the growing international consensus on this matter, and will further consider and refine their position in the light of this.

5. I would like to be able to count on the wisdom and courage of the impending new Government of Israel and to express the hope that it will look afresh at this matter. I hope that it will demonstrate the same degree of political commitment as a previous Government of Israel, which led Israel to be one of the initial signatory States, and that this new Government will complete the process by ratifying the Convention forthwith. Such a step would be seen by the international community as a clear demonstration by Israel of its commitment to peace and increased regional security for itself and its neighbours.

6. Let us be frank. The time has come for Egypt, Lebanon, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Syria and Yemen to ask themselves whether the linkage which they have created between the Chemical Weapons Convention and Israel's membership of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the NPT, is actually working to their benefit. Chemical weapons are not nuclear weapons. The majority of the world's nations have

taken a decision to eliminate the former, and will hopefully one day take a similar decision in relation to the latter. Whilst I fully understand the real concerns of these countries in relation to their need to ensure their national security, I cannot accept that their retention of the right to possess and use chemical weapons does anything to enhance either their national security or their standing in an international community which has already overwhelmingly renounced its right to possess and use these very weapons. On the contrary, the international community would perceive a decision to forgo this right as evidence of a genuine commitment to the achievement of a long-term solution to the pressing security issues in this region of considerable geopolitical importance. Such an action would, I feel sure, greatly assist in pushing the peace process in this region in the right direction, and would also effectively contribute to Egypt's objective of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction - a zone of peace.

7. My position in relation to Iraq is well known. It has always been, and remains, my firm belief that it would be in the best interests of the international community for Iraq to accede to the Convention sooner rather than later. It is clear to me that, whether or not we wish it, international events will and already are pushing us face to face with the fact that Iraq - a country which recently developed and used a large chemical weapons arsenal and which is still under suspicion with respect to its future intentions in this area - has yet to undertake any treaty obligations in relation to chemical disarmament. I therefore wish to pose the question as to whether this is the opportune moment for us collectively to call on Iraq to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

8. In a way, a similar situation pertains in relation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Despite all our efforts, even the establishment of a dialogue with this State has so far proved impossible. I, therefore, look to those States Parties - such as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States of America - which do maintain a dialogue, albeit of a limited nature, with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to make a concerted effort to encourage it to accede to the Convention.

9. Many of the remaining States not party to the Convention have or have had, either in the present or in the past, strong historical, economic, cultural, or political links with States Parties to the Convention. I therefore wish, once more, to repeat the request which I made to the Conference at its Third Session, for such States Parties to creatively explore all such links with a view to persuading and encouraging the remaining non-States Parties to join the fold. Indeed, many of them have no apparent political, military, or economic reason for not joining the Convention, but are simply not conscious of any particular reason why they should do so in the short or medium term. It is up to us all, therefore, to increase our efforts to persuade them of the potential benefits of joining this Convention, not to speak of the disadvantages which will surely accompany non-membership. My staff and I will continue with our efforts in this regard, but without the concerted regional and multilateral political support of the existing States Parties to the Convention there are clear limits to what our representatives and intermediaries can achieve.

10. Universal membership is, however, only one of the objectives which we need to meet if we are to achieve our goal. An equally important objective is the universal observance by the States Parties of the provisions of the Convention. If the object and purpose of the Convention are to be realised, individual States must not only ratify or accede to the Convention, but must also fulfil all their obligations arising from it. Whilst some States Parties are meeting their obligations in full, others are not. More than two years after the entry into force of the Convention, 29 States Parties have still not submitted their initial declarations. It is of course true that most of these States Parties possess neither chemical weapons nor any declarable chemical industry. Nevertheless, their continuing failure to fulfil this most basic of their obligations under the Convention sends the wrong signal to the international community at large – both about the States in question, and, perhaps more unfortunately, about the effectiveness and cohesion of the Organisation as a whole.

11. The fact that the initial declarations of a significant number of States Parties remain incomplete further exacerbates this situation. Whilst in many cases the missing information often relates to relatively minor notification requirements such as points of entry, details of National Authorities etc., in other cases the lacunae or omissions are of a more serious nature. For example, the United States of America - the State Party with the world's largest chemical industry, and one of the staunchest supporters of the Convention - has yet to submit a full declaration under Article VI in relation to its chemical industry facilities. As a result - unlike the chemical industries of other States Parties, several of which are themselves major producers of chemicals - its chemical industry is currently not subject to verification. Now, as we commence our third year after entry into force, it is difficult to see how this continuing level of non-compliance can be justified. States Parties may wish to ask themselves what sort of message this is sending to the world If the international community begins to suspect that the OPCW does not do what it says it is here to do, the very credibility of the OPCW will, slowly but surely, be called into question. If we are to meet our long-term goal, we must rectify this situation now, as a matter of urgency. I urge the Conference to set itself the goal of full compliance with the declaration and notification requirements of the Convention by all States Parties by the end of this calendar year.

12. The inspection of declared chemical industry facilities continues to proceed largely without incident, and marks one of the truly great successes of the implementation of the Convention. This success arises, firstly, from the professionalism and scrupulous impartiality of our inspectors, and secondly, from the cooperation of the national chemical industries themselves, as well as of the National Authorities in question. This commitment by National Authorities and their respective chemical industries was again amply demonstrated at the seminar for National Authority and chemical industry representatives held at the OPCW headquarters building last weekend. With over 170 representatives present, the opportunities to exchange ideas and information were excellent, and this proved to be a very successful and rewarding meeting.

13. This success, however, may prove to be short-lived, if we fail to resolve the issue of the frequency of inspection of Schedule 2 plant sites. It is self-evident that an excessively frequent level of re-inspection of Schedule 2 plant sites will damage the

relationship which we have so painstakingly established with the chemical industry of the inspected States Parties. However, if the frequency of such inspections is too low, we will fail to build the required and expected degree of confidence in these inspections. It is therefore essential for States Parties to focus on this issue, and to actively seek its early resolution.

14. The industry inspection issue is further complicated by the budgetary constraints imposed on such inspections in the 1999 Programme of Work and Budget. I must inform you that, with the continuing absence of the United States of America's industry declarations, the Secretariat would, if action had not been taken, have exhausted its budgeted appropriation for industry inspections for 1999 by the commencement of this session of the Conference. Notwithstanding the considerable reduction in the number of industry inspections undertaken during the first six months of this year, in relation to the projected number of such inspections, there is only enough funding for a token rate of industry inspections during the remainder of 1999. I must stress that this is truly a token rate of such inspections, as funding for only six Schedule 2 and 3 inspections currently remains available to us for the remainder of 1999. This figure is far below the rate of two to three industry inspections per week which we are capable of achieving, and also marks a considerable waste of the Organisation's inspection resources.

15. Another important issue before the Conference at this session is the question of the inspection of discrete organic chemical facilities (DOCs) which, unless the Conference decides otherwise at this session, will begin in May of next year. The 3551 DOCs declared as of 1 June may, by their very nature, differ from facility to facility. One common characteristic of many of them, however, is the presence of multipurpose, batch, production units which can be rapidly and easily reconfigured to produce a range of specialist chemicals such as toxic pesticides, herbicides and pharmaceuticals. They may often also contain corrosion resistant chemical plant, and the more modern facilities can have sophisticated ventilation and safety systems. Many of these DOCs therefore have the inherent capability to be used to produce chemical weapons or their key precursors and, therefore, pose a particular threat to the object and purpose of the Convention. It was for this reason that the drafters of the Convention singled them out for particular attention.

16. The introduction of a verification mechanism for these facilities will, therefore, be an important additional confidence-building measure. I therefore urge the Conference to give careful consideration to this matter.

17. In striving to meet this goal we must not neglect another important aspect of the Convention. I refer, of course, to the need to foster the development of the peaceful use of chemistry in all States Parties. We must accept that, at least in some cases, it is this aspect of the Convention, rather than the more lofty goal of eliminating chemical weapons, which may tip the balance in favour of ratification or accession by those States which have not yet done so. We should not forget that the 44 States which, as of today, have signed the Convention, but have yet to ratify it, have already made the moral commitment not to acquire or use chemical weapons. The commitment, under the Convention, to the free movement of chemicals and chemical technology between

States Parties may be seen by some of these signatory States as a decisive incentive for them to complete the process by ratifying the Convention.

18. The problem of the potential misuse of certain dual-purpose chemicals is not of a hypothetical nature. History has clearly shown that governments which wish to develop or acquire chemical weapons can and will do so by importing dual-purpose chemicals, and by diverting them for this purpose. Ad hoc export control regimes such as the "Australia Group" were accordingly introduced to avert this anticipated risk. It is difficult to deny the past necessity for such export control regimes in the period before the entry into force of the Convention. However, the world does not stand still. The existence of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the obligations which the States Parties to it have taken upon themselves cannot be ignored on a selective basis. The States Parties to the Convention undertake a moral and legal commitment not to develop, produce, stockpile and/or acquire chemical weapons, and also to destroy any chemical weapons which they may have. In return, having demonstrated that they have fulfilled their obligations under the Convention in all respects, they are entitled to expect that no obstacles will be placed in their path regarding the import or export of chemicals, or of relevant technologies, for peaceful purposes. As the Convention contains its own in-house export control regime, it becomes increasingly difficult, after entry into force, to justify the continuing application of ad hoc export control regimes to States Parties to the Convention. I, therefore, once again call on those States Parties which are members of such ad hoc export regimes to reconsider the application of such export controls to fellow States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. A prolonged continuation of the current situation can only damage the Convention and its long-term goal which we have all pledged ourselves to support.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates.

19. Since the moment when I was appointed as the first Director-General of the OPCW, I have striven to achieve for the OPCW the level of international recognition and political standing which is commensurate with the role and the objectives of such an important treaty organisation. I am acutely aware that such recognition does not come automatically, but must be earned. The staff of the Secretariat and I have, therefore, worked tirelessly during these first two years to identify opportunities to promote both the Organisation and the principles which it represents. There have been some rewards. The staff of the Secretariat, and in particular our inspectors, are already recognised as highly professional experts in their various fields of knowledge and expertise. This was amply demonstrated recently when the Chairman of the UN Secretary-General's review panel on Iraq, Ambassador Celso Amorim, approached the OPCW in search of authoritative and independent expertise in the field of chemical weapons to assist the United Nations with its review of UNSCOM's work in Iraq. The same is true of the Secretary-General's recent request for us to provide appropriately qualified experts to help the United Nations in removing the toxic chemical samples and other chemicals stored in the laboratory in the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre. These are requests which I believe we cannot ignore or deny. Requests which we are well qualified, and fully able to meet. As some of you are aware, I provided the United Nations with the names of four

appropriately qualified experts, together with a number of questions and conditions which must be met before they could be dispatched into the field. Naturally, the political decision as to whether or not a UN team should actually be deployed to Iraq is outside the scope and competence of the OPCW, and lies squarely with the Secretary-General and the Security Council of the United Nations.

20. It is important for us to recall that the Secretariat's performance of its duties is only one important yardstick for the international standing of the Organisation. It almost goes without saying that another such criterion is the political support and recognition accorded to the work of the Secretariat by the States Parties to the Convention. It was interesting to note that, despite Ambassador Amorim's request and his subsequent official expression of gratitude for the assistance which the OPCW was able to provide, through its Director of the Inspectorate, Mr Akiyama of Japan, some States Parties were apparently unwilling or unable to recognise the significant contribution of the OPCW to the important work of the panels which he headed. Moreover, I am deeply disturbed by the apparent unwillingness of some States Parties to acknowledge either that a considerable proportion of the world's expertise in the field of chemical weapons, if not the bulk of it, now resides, undeniably, within the Secretariat of the OPCW, or that the political impartiality and integrity with which the Secretariat discharges its obligations in relation to the global elimination and non-proliferation of chemical weapons is what makes it so special.

21. Another factor affecting the standing, credibility and effectiveness of the Organisation is the apparently uncaring attitude of at least some Member States towards the staff of their Secretariat. At the last session of the Conference I drew attention to the urgent need for Member States to reach agreement on a tenure policy for the Secretariat and to conclude their deliberations on the OPCW Staff Regulations. The Conference at its Third Session, like the Executive Council in the preceding intersessional period, was unfortunately unable to reach consensus on this issue, and referred it back to the Executive Council in the intersessional period after the Third Session, with a request that it be resolved as a matter of urgency. Seven months later, we are still waiting. Not merely the infinite slowness of deliberations on this matter, but various initiatives to undermine the legal and professional status of staff, have contributed to the serious erosion of morale amongst the staff of the Secretariat, a fact which – at the latest – was brought home to senior management recently as a consequence of the organisational change exercise which I have initiated and which I fully support. On the one hand Member States never tire of exhorting staff to be ever more hard-working and efficient, while on the other they often appear unwilling to fund and develop a Secretariat which encourages and rewards hard work, commitment, and initiative. What Member States expect of staff does not appear to tally with what they themselves are prepared to deliver.

22. The situation is being further exacerbated by what happened to the issue of the classification of posts within the Secretariat. It can be readily demonstrated that most professional posts within the Secretariat are set at one, if not two, grades lower than equivalent posts in all other major international organisations. The classification exercise undertaken in 1998 as mandated by you, whilst by no means perfect, clearly demonstrated this fact. It also showed that there are a number of inequalities in the

current grading of staff, both at the professional and general service level, within the Secretariat. The attitude of most States Parties to this study so far has been extremely damaging to staff morale. A second classification exercise, as currently proposed by States Parties, may well produce some individual differences, at least some of which will be attributable to changes which have taken place since the first review, but will not fundamentally change the overall outcome. The second review is, moreover, being seen by staff as a means of further delaying the rectification of the injustices in grading which some of them are suffering. The recent initiation of a group legal action by approximately 70 staff members to the International Labour Organisation would never have occurred in an Organisation in which staff felt that their contribution was recognised and appreciated.

23. I fully understand that, given Member States' experience of some older international organisations, there are concerns about the risk of over bureaucratisation, excessive budgets, over generous remuneration packages etc. Let me assure you that my colleagues in the management of the Secretariat and myself are your sincere allies in this respect. You will remember that we came out strongly in support of service in the Secretariat being of a non-career nature. At the same time, however, it is my responsibility to maintain at your disposal a Secretariat staffed with competent and effective personnel who are proud of the Organisation they work for and committed to its success. In order for me to able to do this the remuneration package offered to staff must be in keeping with the standards of performance which we are seeking.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates.

24. A key criterion for the success of the Convention is the timely destruction of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles and the associated chemical weapons production facilities. I have to report that the Organisation's performance in this area has been somewhat patchy so far. Of the four declared possessor States Parties the United States of America is already well ahead of the destruction rate which it is required to meet under the Convention. A senior US official recently announced that the United States was on target to achieve the destruction of 22% of its chemical weapons stockpile by the end of this year. He also stated that he remained confident that the United States would meet the target of completing the destruction of its stockpile by the May 2007 deadline.

25. Although destruction operations in two of the other declared possessor States Parties have yet to begin, construction of the necessary facilities is, nevertheless, underway, and both of these States Parties remain confident that they can meet the 2007 deadline. The situation in the fourth such State Party, the Russian Federation, is much more problematic. I must stress that it is my belief that the Russian Federation is as fully committed to the Convention as ever, and has fully demonstrated its commitment by submitting its declarations and by cooperating fully with the OPCW inspection teams. It is now abundantly clear, however, that due to economic circumstances largely beyond its political control, the Russian Federation will be able to comply with the Convention's 10-year destruction timeline only if it receives considerable support from other States Parties. Much has been made of the "possessor pays" concept in recent years, and it is true that this one of the foundation stones on which the

Convention was built. I would nevertheless invite States Parties to recall our shared and overarching commitment to the destruction of all chemical weapons stockpiles and their associated production facilities by the year 2007. Only when the last chemical weapon has been destroyed will the international community reap the reward of the increased security which we all seek. Some States Parties have already recognised this, and are contributing to the chemical weapons destruction programme in the Russian Federation. I would strongly urge those States Parties which have not yet done so to give serious consideration to whether they might also be able to contribute generously to the timely resolution of this problem.

26. The situation with the 60 chemical weapons production facilities declared by nine States Parties continues to improve. As I reported previously, all of these facilities have been fully inactivated, and this has been verified by the Secretariat. As of 18 June the Secretariat had issued destruction certificates for 12 former chemical weapons production facilities. The majority of those facilities which have not already been certified as destroyed or approved for conversion for use for peaceful purposes are either in the process of being destroyed, or will be the subject of conversion requests in the coming months.

27. I believe that the very fact that the Convention permits the conversion of former chemical weapons production facilities indicates that conversion is viewed as a means of alleviating, rather than exacerbating, any economic difficulties which declared possessor States Parties may possess. With this in mind, it is my sincere hope that future requests for conversion submitted to the Executive Council and the Conference will be judged solely on the basis of the risk which these converted facilities may pose to the object and purpose of the Convention.

28. In this statement I have raised a number of issues, some of which will undoubtedly prove controversial. I have done this because it is my firm conviction that only by bringing such issues out into the open in a forum such as this will it be possible to address them, and hopefully to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion. I also realise that the disarmament departments of most of our States Parties also have only limited staff, and that, with their commitments to the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO, the negotiations on a verification protocol for the BWC and a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, and next year's NPT Review Conference, these departments are currently very heavily committed. Let me remind you, however, that the problems which we are now facing will also impact on these other regimes. If we cannot resolve some of the outstanding verification-related issues, particularly those related to industry, under the Chemical Weapons Convention, there is little hope that we will be able to bring the concept of the OPBW, for example, to fruition. I therefore urge you to devote more of your albeit limited resources to the resolution of the issues which I have highlighted today.

29. The present inability of the Executive Council to make decisions on many of the long list of issues before it means that I am often placed in the position of having to take action without the benefit of the Council's political guidance. This inevitably leads to challenges that I have exceeded my authority as Director-General of the OPCW. It is my firm belief, however, that - for the sake of the credibility and international

standing of this Organisation - I cannot act otherwise. The pioneering work of the OPCW cannot be allowed to be held ransom to short-sighted acts of micromanagement and, on occasion, to individual idiosyncrasies. The OPCW has an important role to fulfil in the years ahead, and its success or failure will ultimately be judged by the international community as a whole, and not solely by its States Parties.

30. Let me finish by saying that, whilst much still remains to be done, we can be very proud of what we have achieved in such a short space of time. The Organisation is fully operational. The verification concept, as implemented by the Convention, is already widely accepted, both at chemical weapons-related facilities and at chemical industry facilities. Our internationally recruited staff are noted for their professionalism, fair-mindedness, and independent approach. What matters now is that we continue to build on this excellent start and make this a model for future organisations in the field of disarmament. Only by doing this can we hope to achieve our ultimate goal of a future free from the scourge of chemical weapons.

31. Once again, I thank you for your attention.

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