



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Fifth Session
15 - 19 May 2000

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**MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
FOR THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
FIFTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
The Hague, 15 - 19 May 2000**

1. It gives me great pleasure to convey my greetings to all who have gathered for the Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.
2. This year marks the third anniversary of the Convention's entry into force, providing us with an opportunity to reflect on our progress and to assess what steps remain to be taken if we are to eliminate the deadly threat posed by chemical weapons. Important progress has been made. The number of States Parties to the Convention has grown from 88 to 135, and the number of signatories has risen to 172. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has come into existence, and is making its presence felt in the smooth implementation of the Convention. And its support to countries pursuing chemical weapons destruction programmes has continued to grow in depth and scope. We must sustain the momentum.
3. The Chemical Weapons Convention contains concrete measures for verification, and provides for stringent measures to ensure that all its provisions are adhered to. I urge all States Parties to the Convention to continue helping the OPCW in its efforts to uphold the Convention's provisions. And I urge all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so without delay.
4. Please accept my best wishes for the success of your important deliberations.

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