



OPCW

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**MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO THE
SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
DELIVERED BY MR VLADIMIR PETROVSKY, DIRECTOR-GENERAL,
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA
The Hague, 14 May 2001**

It gives me great pleasure to send my greetings to the Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Since entering into force in April 1997, the Chemical Weapons Convention has played a vital role in international efforts to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, to curb their proliferation and to achieve their elimination. The CWC was the first treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction negotiated completely within a multilateral forum, the Conference on Disarmament. The Convention's scope, the obligations assumed by States Parties, and the system of verification have also broken new ground for multilateral disarmament agreements.

This negotiating success must be followed by implementation of the Convention's provisions. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has made steady progress in that regard, and its activities are expanding. It is vital that the States Parties now give the OPCW their full support, in particular by providing the resources necessary for it to function effectively.

I also urge those States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so without delay. One hundred and sixty-five States have now signed the Convention, and during the past year the number of States Parties grew to 143. While this is an encouraging development, there is no room for complacency.

The relationship agreement signed between the United Nations and the OPCW last October is an important step in ensuring that we will work together fruitfully in this area of common concern. Let me take this opportunity to reassure you of my support for the Convention and for the OPCW, and my commitment to upholding the viability of this key instrument of international peace and security. Please accept my best wishes for a successful session.

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