

(Check Against Delivery)

**Statement by H. E. Mr Cheng Jingye,
Head of the Chinese Delegation to the Second Review Conference
on the Chemical Weapons Convention
(The Hague, 8 April 2008)**



Mr Chairman,

Please allow me, first of all, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Second Review Conference on the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”). The Chinese delegation is ready to work with you and other delegations for the success of this Conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Lyn Parker and the Open-ended Working Group under his leadership for the preparatory work. I would also like to associate myself with the statement made by H. E. Dr. Jose Diaz Duque, the distinguished Cuban Representative, on behalf of NAM CWC States Parties and China.

Mr Chairman,

As the first multilateral arms control treaty that completely bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and requires their thorough destruction under a stringent verification regime, the Convention, in nearly 11 years since its entry into force, has played a significant role in eliminating the threat of chemical weapons to the human society and won universal appreciation from

the international community. The progress made in the implementation of the Convention has fully demonstrated that multilateralism is the only effective way to address threat, safeguard common security, and promote international peace and development.

It is the shared responsibility and mission of all States Parties to facilitate the early realisation of the object and purpose of the Convention. All parties should make full use of by this important Conference for a comprehensive review of the operation of the Convention, so that we can sum up experience, consolidate consensus and expand cooperation in promoting the effective and balanced implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

China has submitted to the Conference its national implementation report and three position papers, which fully elaborate the implementation work and experience of the Chinese Government, and its position on the issues concerned. I would like to, in the context of the agenda of the Conference, give a brief statement of China's views on the following issues:

1. Total destruction of chemical weapons within the prescribed timelines is the core objective and central task of the Convention, which is crucial to its authority and credibility. While appreciating the efforts made by the possessor States in implementing their obligations under the Convention, China calls on these states to honour their commitment by overcoming all difficulties to ensure that destruction is completed by 2012 -- the deadline established by the Convention. The coming years will be crucial as destruction operations peak. The OPCW should be highly cognisant of the importance and complexity of the chemical weapons destruction process. In allocating human and financial resources and in the programme of work, priority should be given to verification on destruction activities.
2. The early, safe and complete destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China is a matter which bears on the core objective of the Convention and on the physical and ecological safety of the Chinese people. Therefore, the Chinese Government attaches great importance to this issue. With joint efforts by China and Japan, some progress has been made in the excavation and recovery and in preliminary preparations for destruction. However, as the deadline for the completion of destruction is approaching, not one piece of Japanese ACWs has been destroyed so far. China urges Japan to faithfully fulfil its obligations under the Convention and increase its input, so as to bring about an early start and timely completion of the destruction process. For its part, China will as always provide appropriate cooperation. And we support a continued positive

role of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as “the Secretariat”).

3. Measures to improve the verification system must conform to the provisions of the Convention and follow the principle of “impartiality and rationality”. The existing verification system is on the whole effective and viable. In recent years, States Parties have been engaged in consultations to explore measures of streamlining allocation of verification resources and optimising inspections. China would like to reiterate that the verification of chemical weapons destruction remains the priority of the verification regime, and efforts of optimisation and saving resources should not be made at the expense of effectiveness of verification. In planning inspections under Article VI of the Convention, due consideration should be given to such factors as the risk of facilities and their uneven geographical distribution. China calls upon all parties to find, in the spirit of pragmatism and cooperation, an early and proper solution to important outstanding issues such as risk assessment and the site-selection methodology for OCPF inspections.
4. It is an important objective of the Convention to foster international exchanges and cooperation in the field of chemical activities with a view to creating favourable conditions for the economic development of the States Parties. Like security guarantee, economic development represents an important benefit for being States Parties, which is of great value in attracting more countries to join the Convention. China calls upon State Parties and the Secretariat to recognise the importance of international cooperation as highly relevant for the comprehensive and balanced implementation of the Convention. More resources should be allocated and viable programmes be formulated to facilitate exchanges and cooperation in an effective and efficient manner.

Mr Chairman,

China has consistently supported the object and purpose of the Convention by comprehensively and earnestly fulfilling its obligations. China has enacted and is steadily improving its implementation legislation, and has established implementation offices at both national and local levels, which form an implementation network covering the whole country and with effective management. China has submitted all its declarations in a timely and accurate manner, and has received so far over 150 inspections successfully. In line with the international practices, a set of laws and regulations for export control has been enacted and enforced rigorously to prevent the relevant chemicals, equipment and technologies from being used for purposes prohibited under the Convention.

China is working actively for the application of the Convention to the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR) and to the Taiwan region. The implementation in the Hong Kong SAR is well underway. The preparations for implementation in the Macao SAR are also proceeding in an orderly manner. The Chinese Government will try to find a pragmatic solution, on the basis of the principle of One China, to the application of the Convention to the Taiwan region.

With concrete actions, China has worked to promote the universality of the Convention, support the development of national implementation measures and related interactions, and facilitate assistance and protection and international cooperation. Together with the OPCW, the Chinese Government held two international seminars and one Asian National Authorities meeting on implementation issues. Since the First Review Conference, China has donated on different occasions USD 60,000 for activities relating to the universality of the Convention, assistance and protection, international cooperation, and the tenth anniversary of the EIF of the Convention. In coming May, China and the OPCW will jointly organise a training course on assistance and protection in Beijing.

Under the leadership of the Director-General, the Secretariat has accomplished an enormous amount of work for the comprehensive and effective implementation of the Convention. China appreciates this and has always actively supported and cooperated with the Director-General and the Secretariat. China has hosted two training courses for inspectors, and two of its laboratories have become OPCW designated laboratories. China was among the first to receive Schedule 2 inspections with on-site sampling and analysis, and has held useful discussions with the Secretariat on declarations in electronic form.

Mr Chairman,

We are advancing with solid steps in the implementation of the Convention. Looking to the future, there is still a long way to go before the full realisation of the aim of the Convention which embodies the common aspiration of the mankind for a world free of chemical weapons. China stands ready to join all other parties in a continued effort to promote the full implementation of the Convention and to contribute to building a harmonious world with lasting peace and common prosperity.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.