



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Third Review Conference  
8 – 19 April 2013

RC-3/NAT.74  
8 April 2013  
ENGLISH  
Original: ARABIC

**THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR MOHAMMAD JAWAD AL DOREKY  
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF IRAQ  
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Ahmet Üzümcü, Director-General of the OPCW,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate your friendly country, Poland, on presiding over the work of the conference. We are fully confident that your wisdom and expertise will steer this Conference to a successful conclusion. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation with you and with the delegations of the Member States in order to adopt constructive decisions and recommendations that would contribute to achieving our common goal, namely establishing a world free of all types of chemical weapons. I wish also to thank H.E. Excellency Nassima Baghli of Algeria, Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of the Third Review Conference, for the efforts she has made.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Mr Akhondzadeh of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which assumes the Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

It is a source of pride and pleasure for me to address the Review Conference on behalf of my delegation for the first time since Iraq's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention in February 2009. I wish to inform you that over the past four years, my country has actively engaged the OPCW and its Member States in several areas. I may even say that Iraq has become one of the main contributors to international peace and security, after having posed a threat thereto before 2003.

The achievements that have been made at the national level in a short period of time are a clear illustration of this role. Moreover, Iraq has played different roles and assumed several positions at the OPCW and during Convention-related meetings, including the position of Chairperson of the Conference's Committee of the Whole, Member of the OPCW Executive Council for two consecutive sessions, Vice-Chairperson of the 2012 Conference of the States Parties, Member of the Credentials Committee for the year 2012, and facilitator for Article VII of the Convention. As part of its commitment to the provisions of the Convention, Iraq has submitted its national declarations under Articles III and VI of the



Convention in full transparency and cooperation with the OPCW Technical Secretariat. Furthermore, Baghdad received two inspection teams of the Technical Secretariat during 2011 and 2012. The national legislation provided for under Article VII of the Convention has been adopted and submitted to the OPCW. Iraq has also contributed to achieving the universality of the Convention and has become the 186th State Party thereto. We should note that the number of States Parties to the Convention was 183 when the Second Review Conference was held in 2008. My country is also looking forward to holding the meeting of the Asian National Authorities in Iraq in 2014 in coordination with the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

All these achievements are part of efforts made by Iraq's Government to dispose of weapons of mass destruction and prevent their non-proliferation. They confirm Iraq's consistent policy enshrined in its permanent constitution and its intention to dispose of the remnants of the previous programme as soon as possible, in accordance with the requirements of the Convention. We hope that actual destruction operations will start in 2015.

I take this opportunity to thank the Director-General of the OPCW, the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties which have provided Iraq with assistance to eliminate the remnants of Iraq's previous programme, namely the United States, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Germany, India and Poland.

Sixteen years after entry into force of the Convention, we should feel proud of the achievements made towards its implementation, in particular the destruction of some 80% of various categories of declared chemicals. In this regard, we wish to express our thanks and appreciation to India, Albania and a State Party for their completion of destruction operations. 188 countries representing 98% of the world population have become parties to the Convention. Sixteen years after its entry into force, the Convention sets itself apart from other related treaties by its achievements in the destruction of chemical weapons. Having actively interacted with the OPCW and engaged in its activities, Iraq believes that the decisions that will be taken by this Conference will determine the future of the OPCW and its work in the light of the rapid changes and developments in chemistry and science. Also, Iraq underlines the role of the OPCW in the implementation of the Convention, as an effective tool for ensuring the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes, thus contributing to stronger international peace and security and to a world free of chemical weapons.

Concerning universality, Iraq has made, during the last four years, great progress in fulfilling its obligations under the Convention. Based on that experience, my delegation invites other States to follow in Iraq's footsteps and join the Convention as soon as possible. Universality is the only guarantor and tool to rid mankind of all forms of chemical weapons, which should be one of the core objectives of OPCW future action. States Parties should acknowledge the importance of fulfilling their national obligations as contained in the provisions of the Convention. While we support OPCW efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention with a view to promoting international peace and security, and ensuring the total elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, we reaffirm the importance of focusing on achieving the core objective of the Convention, which, in turn, will definitely make an effective contribution to non-proliferation efforts in conjunction with the international community. We are all aware that Iraq has been and continues to be subject to terrorist acts that affect its institutional and social structures. For this reason, we believe that the OPCW can play a positive role, in coordination with other organisations, in developing international laws and resolutions to ensure that chemical weapons stay out of reach of terrorist groups,

and we affirm that top priority needs to be given to its key role, namely the total elimination of chemical weapons.

This delegation is of the view that one of the top priorities of the OPCW is to provide tailored sustainable and technical assistance to States Parties, according to their needs, as part of “implementation support”, which will contribute to the speedy and effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention by these States Parties in the best manner, especially with regard to assistance in exchanging information and expertise, raising awareness and building relationships among States Parties’ chemical industries. This process will improve performance through the selection of best practices of States Parties to promote chemical industry for peaceful purposes. We stress the importance of establishing networks at the regional and international levels, to start for example to exchange best practices to improve national implementation.

Twenty-five years ago, the Iraqi people suffered the horrific consequences of the use of chemical weapons by the former regime in the city of Halabja. More than 5,000 unarmed civilians were killed and more than 10,000 were wounded, maimed or disabled. 25 years after, inhabitants of that unfortunate city are still suffering from the consequences of the use of this type of lethal and internationally prohibited weapons, whose negative impact on the environment in the region is still visible to this very day.

The possibility of use of these lethal weapons still exists today, especially as such weapons exist in the Middle East and that some States in the region are not party to the relevant international conventions. Hence the extreme importance and urgency to make the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction (chemical and biological). We believe it is highly important that States sponsoring and organising the Conference on the Middle East, the United Nations and relevant international organisations make real and intensive efforts to set a new date as early as possible for the international Conference which was scheduled to be held from 18 to 20 December 2012 in Helsinki.

Mr Chairperson,

The Republic of Iraq supports and welcomes the request made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Director-General of the OPCW with regard to establishing a fact-finding mission on the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and his request that the OPCW provide cooperation and assistance in this respect. We take this opportunity to commend the role of the OPCW and its Director-General in response to this matter, and the appointment of Mr Ake Sellström of Sweden as head of the mission. We call for the mission to commence its work as soon as possible in order to establish facts and prevent the use of such weapons in the future. We stress the need to ensure the safety and security of chemicals and prevent them from falling into the hands of armed gangs and terrorist groups.

I wish that this statement be adopted as one of the official documents of this Conference.

I thank you.

- - - 0 - - -