



STATEMENT OF NIGERIA

DELIVERED BY:

MR. JEGEDE J. F. SUNDAY,

CHAIRMAN,

***NATIONAL AUTHORITY ON CHEMICAL AND
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION/
PERMANENT SECRETARY (POLITICAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT, PRESIDENCY)***

AT THE

***THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CHEMICAL
WEAPONS CONVENTION
THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS***

8TH – 19TH APRIL, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of the Third Special Session of the Conference of States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Third Review Conference of CWC. We have full confidence in your ability and wisdom and your well-known diplomatic skills in steering our work to the desired outcome. The Nigerian delegation wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation in the task of reviewing the operation of CWC since the last review exercise in 2008.

Nigeria also wishes to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Ambassador Nassima Bagli of Algeria in the preparatory work of this Conference as chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on the Preparation for the Third Review Conference.

Let me also, Mr. Chairman, thank the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcu, for his opening statement on the activities of OPCW, and to acknowledge his efforts and commitment in skillfully guiding Organization towards achieving the objectives of the Convention. I further wish to thank him for his detailed report on the developments on the Convention over the last five years. We support the views expressed by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, in his statement during the opening ceremony and see his participation in this Conference as a demonstration of the importance that the international community attaches to this process.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by Ambassador Sirajuddin Hamid Yousif of Sudan on behalf of the Africa Group and by Ambassador Akhondzadeh, the Deputy Minister for International Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned States Parties and China.

Mr. Chairman,

As we begin the Third Review Conference, I wish to reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and our support to OPCW in its mandate to achieve the purposes and objectives of the Convention through its full implementation. Nigeria accords high priority to all global efforts towards ending the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, including chemical weapons. To this end, Nigeria has, since becoming a State Party to CWC, strongly supported all efforts to achieve its fundamental objectives of prohibiting the production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer and use of chemical weapons, as well as their total destruction. Nigeria also attaches great importance to the fulfilment of Article X,

which seeks to provide assistance and protection against the threat or use of chemical weapons, and of Article XI that promotes the peaceful uses of chemistry and the exchange of scientific and technical information.

Nigeria has continued to maintain transparency and a spirit of close collaboration and cooperation with the OPCW by providing all necessary information on its chemical activities as required by the Organization. It is common knowledge that inspections conducted by OPCW in Nigeria over the years did not give any indication of diversion of chemical materials to non-peaceful purposes. We have also tried to ensure regular submission of our national reports to the Technical Secretariat through the Nigerian National Authority on Chemical and Biological Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chemical Weapons Convention, now in its sixteenth year of operation, has remained one of the most successful instruments of disarmament, featuring non-discriminatory obligations for the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. It has remained a unique multilateral instrument banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in a non-discriminatory and verifiable manner under strict and effective international control. In this regard, the full and effective implementation of the Convention would be a major contribution to international peace and security. This Third Review Conference is, therefore, very important as an opportunity for all States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to achieving the object and purpose of the Convention as set out in its Preamble and its provisions.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has taken note of the report of the Director-General on the developments regarding the Convention since the Second Review Conference in 2008. From our analysis of the report, we have reached the conclusion that a great deal of progress has been made during the period under review.

While noting the robust and continuous efforts of the industry verification regime and assurances of non re-emergence of chemical weapons as a result of these efforts, it may also be worthy note that industry verification faces possible future challenges of huge magnitude as more developing States Parties embrace industrialization with establishment of more chemical industries. We call upon the Technical Secretariat to adequately take this factor into account in its calculations and projections in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

The Nigerian delegation calls upon the Secretariat to continue implementing the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (the Africa Programme) and to provide feedback on a regular basis on the activities and progress made in this regard. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of regular budgetary funding for the Programme just as we encourage States Parties to make further voluntary contributions to support it.

The Nigerian delegation expresses the need for the Secretariat to establish a strong relationship with United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, and in particular with the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa based in Lome, Togo. We strongly believe that these regional centres could be important tools towards achieving the object and purpose of the Convention considering in particular the confidence they enjoy among States in their regions of jurisdiction. Coincidentally, the regional centres and OPCW are working towards similar objectives.

Finally, we reiterate the view that we expressed at the 17th Conference of States Parties that the Third Review Conference should focus on achieving a world free of chemical weapons, along with universality of the Convention, a robust verification mechanism, a strong cooperative relationship with chemical industry, a treaty regime that is both flexible enough to respond to a changing scientific environment particularly the emerging convergence of chemistry and biology, and a treaty regime that is authoritative enough to command universal respect and support. In this context, we re-emphasize the need for States Parties to use the Third Review Conference to re-commit themselves to achieving the goals of the CWC, critically evaluate their collective and national implementation efforts and consider whether any re-orientation of the work of the OPCW is required.

Nigeria would like to request that this Statement be circulated as an official document of the Third Review Conference.

I thank you for your attention.

