



**Statement of His Excellency Mr. Buddhi Athauda Ambassador and
Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka**

**Third Review Conference of the States Parties of the Chemical
Weapons Convention**

09th April 2013

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to extend its congratulations to you, Ambassador Krzysztof Paturej, on your election as the Chairperson of the Third Review Conference of the Organization of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and assure you of our fullest cooperation in your task ahead. We are confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the Conference will achieve success.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to thank the Director General of the OPCW, Mr. Ahmet Uzumcu, for his comprehensive report and commitment. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Chairman of the Open-Ended Working Group H.E Nassima Baghli, Ambassador of Algeria, for her dedicated efforts in the preparation of the draft report of the Third Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully endorses the statement delivered by H.E Akhondzadeh, Deputy Minister for International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the NAM States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka suffered a brutal terrorist conflict for more than three decades and finally eradicated terrorism in 2009, under the leadership of His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa. With the dawn of peace political stability is deeply rooted in the country and there is robust economic growth.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka is one of the first countries to ratify the CWC in 1994. Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the CWC for its objective of taking concerted international action to control production, stockpiling & use of chemical weapons and preventing proliferation of chemical weapons. National Legislation in this regard under the CWC Act and Import & Export Control Act, which includes registration of the users of Scheduled Chemicals and issue of permits for each consignment of imported/ exported Scheduled Chemicals had been enacted.

Mr. Chairman,

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Sri Lanka functions as the lead technical agency in the country with regard to any situation of chemical emergency. In this context, Sri Lanka is grateful for the assistance provided by the OPCW to help develop the Response Specialities on Chemical Weapons and Toxic Industrial Chemicals in Sri Lanka. The National Authority in Sri Lanka for CWC, which is established under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce has conducted five modules of training programmes with the assistance of OPCW since 2009. Participants were selected from a cross section of middle and higher-level officers from the Sri Lanka Army, Air Force, Police, Fire Brigade, medical professionals and the officers of the Government Analysts' Department. At present Response Specialists offer their expertise, particularly in the area of conducting training programmes for local authorities under the purview of the National Authority. These training programmes are focused on areas such as Hazardous Chemical Management for Sustainable Industrial Development, Chemical Weapons Convention and Chemical Emergency Management, and Fire Safety and Security. While endorsing the proposal of establishing a training and research centre at the OPCW Secretariat, my delegation would like to request further assistance from OPCW, especially in the areas of technical knowhow in capacity building, and exchange of expertise.

Mr. Chairman,

Under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the National Authority has conducted a series of inspections in the Industrial Zone, in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. The objectives of these inspections were to identify industrialists who handle Scheduled Chemicals and assist to enhance the health, safety and security in their respective work places, as well as prevention of chemical accidents and to achieve a sustainable industrial development in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Chairman,

My country continues to take action to fulfil its obligations under Article VII of the Convention on National Implementation Measures. With the invitation of the Government of Sri Lanka, the Tenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia under the OPCW was held in Colombo in 2012. Representatives from over 50 countries in Asia Pacific Region and senior officials of the OPCW attended this meeting. This meeting served as a forum in which the States Parties in the region presented their needs for assistance in relation to Article VII and indicated what assistance they can offer to the other States Parties in this regard. An awareness programme is also scheduled to be held in June 2013 to introduce CWC obligations, familiarize the legislative matters of the CWC Act and discuss any issues faced during the Import/ export of chemicals.

Mr. Chairman,

The National Authority is expected to launch a new website by the middle of this year to provide a quality and efficient services to its clients, mainly for industrialists and chemical importers/ exporters. It also provides information about the National Authority, online applications for import/ export chemicals, valuable information to enhance chemical security, safety and health factor in industries and useful web links related to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The National Authority is also planning to organize a two day International Conference on "Science and Management for Peace and Development" in Colombo from 21-22nd October 2013 to advance the Human Resource in the world for peaceful use of Science and Management for Human Development.

Mr. Chairman,

Since Sri Lanka is not a producer of weapons of mass destruction, its prime objective is to regulate and control the Scheduled Chemicals to ensure that it will only be used for peaceful purposes. My country has been a strong supporter of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, hence supports all measures to free the world of all weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we are confident that our deliberations will facilitate accelerating the process of implementation of the Convention and Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to work together with all States Parties and OPCW to realize the objectives of the Convention.

Thank You.