



Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Sweden

**Statement by Sweden at the Third Review Conference of the States Parties
of the Chemical Weapons Convention, The Hague 8-19 April 2013**

Mr. President,

Let me first of all welcome you to the chair of this important Conference. Sweden aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to make the following additional points.

With regard to the future of the Chemical Weapons Convention, my Government sees two overriding priorities. Firstly we need to see a swift completion of destruction of chemical weapons in the remaining possessor states. Sweden regrets that the disarmament deadlines established in the Convention could not be met. We urge the possessor states to expedite destruction, in accordance with the 2011 decision of the Conference of States Parties.

Secondly, the OPCW must remain a depository of knowledge and expertise, which can be called upon by the international community to address situations involving toxic chemicals in possible breach of the Convention, in the post-destruction era.

This will place requirements on States Parties, as well as on the OPCW. In our view, it will require a review of the way that tenure is implemented for OPCW inspectors, which should take place as early as possible after this Conference. The Director-General referred to this need in his statement to the last Conference of States Parties. We would call for a consultation among States Parties, and would invite the Director-General to formulate more clearly what could be done in order to ensure that the organisation is able to continue to assume this

role, as chemical weapons expertise becomes increasingly scarce, and the recruitment pool continues to dwindle in the coming years.

Mr. President,

Sweden is deeply concerned at the allegations of chemical weapons being used in connection with the on-going conflict in Syria. There can be no doubt that the international community would hold those responsible of such actions to account. Likewise, there must be no proliferation of such horrific weapons in an already volatile region. We welcome the decision to launch an investigation of alleged use, to be carried out by the United Nations and the OPCW and led by the Swedish expert Åke Sellström, and look forward to being informed of its outcome.

Sweden has considerable expertise and infrastructure in this area, and is prepared to consider any request for assistance, including within the framework of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Thank you Mr. President.