



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Third Review Conference
8 – 19 April 2013

RC-3/NAT.34
8 April 2013
ENGLISH only

PAKISTAN

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR AIZAZ AHMAD CHAUDHRY
ADDITIONAL FOREIGN SECRETARY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ISLAMABAD AND LEADER OF PAKISTAN DELEGATION
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairman,

I will begin by congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the Third Review Conference. We are confident of a successful and productive outcome, as the Conference is being guided by someone of your abilities and experience. I assure you our full cooperation and support during the deliberations.

While associating with the statement of the Non-aligned Movement and China, I will outline the approach of my country on issues that we believe are critical for the future of the OPCW which stands at an important crossroads.

Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü in his report has provided a comprehensive overview of the activities of the Secretariat over the last five years. More importantly, he has also focused on some of the crucial questions facing the Organisation. I wish to express Pakistan's appreciation to the Director-General for his effective leadership of the Organisation and for clearly enunciating the achievements of the OPCW as well as identifying areas requiring our close and serious attention.

I would like to express my delegation's deep appreciation to the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, Ambassador Nassima Baghli and her bureau members for their hard work in preparing the draft document for this Conference. It is our understanding that the draft document submitted by Ambassador Baghli would be the basis for further negotiations in the Conference.

We have noted with concern the reports about alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria. We believe that the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances would be reprehensible and contrary to the legal norms and standards of the international community. We would like to express our support for the investigation process that has been initiated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the support of the OPCW. We also urge all those States that are not yet party to the Convention to do so without further delay.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (Convention) has now completed sixteen years as a functioning, effective international treaty. A blemish in an otherwise laudable record was the missed final extended deadline for the complete destruction of declared chemical weapons.



However, the issue was amicably resolved by the States Parties in order to preserve the integrity of the Convention. No doubt, the progress made in destroying chemical weapons and the stated commitment of the possessor States were extenuating circumstances that aided this decision. It is now up to the possessor States to reciprocate by ensuring that the remaining stockpiles are eliminated as early as possible.

Pakistan strongly believes that the Convention stands out as incomparable and worth every effort to preserve and to strengthen it. Its existence and near universal acceptance raise hopes that a day might come when all disarmament goals will be pursued in like manner and that the entitlement to equal security will be restored to all.

The legitimacy of the Convention defines our unwavering support for it and for the Organisation. We are, however, concerned that a convergence of factors have created new challenges for the Organisation. There is no denying the fact that disarmament—the principal *raison d'être* for the OPCW—has registered significant progress and that future calculations regarding resource requirements need to take account of this reality. At the same time, the global financial crisis has created temptations to reduce budgetary allocations. Such impulses unregulated by objective considerations of the long term health of the Convention or the integrity of OPCW's programmes could be damaging.

We are of the view that the Director-General's managerial responsibility in assessing the real needs of the Organisation should be fully trusted and strengthened. This is fundamentally a good practice. The combined wisdom of strengthening his authority, while at the same time providing him a general road map for the future, is what is needed of States Parties at this critical juncture. The Third Review Conference offers precisely such an opportunity to facilitate the transition of the Organisation in a manner that preserves and strengthens the Convention for the long term.

Treaties succeed with the support of all their members. The balance of rights and obligations in the Convention represents a carefully managed consensus. Despite the Convention being the most successful disarmament treaty, there is work to be done in several areas.

We can take satisfaction from the fact that the Convention is now supported politically and legally by 188 countries of the world who are its States Parties. Acceptance of the Convention by the international community on this scale is unprecedented. But the goals of the Convention will remain to be achieved until it attains complete universality. We call upon all States not Party to join the Convention at the earliest.

Pakistan also supports the efforts to promote the effective implementation of Article VII of the Convention. The assertion that domestic implementation strengthens the overall effectiveness of the Convention is fully justified. We, however, also take an objective and sympathetic view on this issue, especially, since most of the countries that have not been able to fulfil the requirements of the Convention are developing countries faced with competing challenges and lack of necessary resources. We believe that the initiatives taken by the Secretariat in this regard are positive and encouraging.

Pakistan takes seriously its responsibility to implement the Convention. This is evident from our national legislation that covers not only the Convention but also our related international obligations. We are one of the first countries to show our concrete support to the National

Authority Mentorship Programme and will closely share with another State Party our experience in implementing the Convention.

We attach great importance to the provisions of the Convention on international cooperation and assistance. We believe that greater investment in this area will generate stronger support for the overall goals of the Convention by the vast majority of its States Parties. This is the reality. It does not need new rationales or justifications. Similarly better implementation of obligations under the Convention to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and technical information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes can only serve the long term interests of strengthening the Convention.

Pakistan ardently supports all activities and initiatives of the OPCW under Article X. Besides holding international basic assistance and protection courses in Pakistan, we took the initiative in late 2011, to develop the sub-regional assistance and protection centre in light of the concept floated by OPCW, to meet essential needs of the region. Our initiative has been supported by the OPCW and a number of regional States Parties, and we are grateful for their support. I take this opportunity to announce the establishment of this centre in our capital, Islamabad.

In conclusion, I would once again reaffirm Pakistan's strong support for the goals of the Convention and the work of the OPCW. The Director-General and staff at the Secretariat deserve our commendation for the effective manner in which they have projected the accomplishments of multilateralism as evident at the OPCW.

Mr Chairman, my delegation approaches the Third Review Conference in this positive spirit and we will work actively and constructively for its success. I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this meeting. I thank you.

- - - 0 - - -