



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Third Review Conference  
8 – 19 April 2013

RC-3/NAT.48  
8 April 2013  
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

**CUBA**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ZELMYS MARÍA DOMÍNGUEZ CORTINA  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE OPCW  
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairman,

The Cuban delegation congratulates you on your election as Chairman of this Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and we extend these congratulations to the other members of the General Committee.

We should also like to express our thanks to Her Excellency Ms Nassima Baghli, Ambassador of Algeria, for her efforts and dedication as Chair of the open-ended working group for preparation of the Third Review Conference.

Cuba aligns itself fully with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Our fundamental position is clear. Cuba advocates general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. The existence of weapons of mass destruction represents a grave threat to international peace and security.

Cuba, which has been one of the original signatories since 13 January 1993, is firmly committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Executive Centre for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, established in 1998 as the executive body of the Cuban National Authority, has carried out commendable work aimed at ensuring the full and strict implementation of the Convention by our country.

Cuba is one of the States Parties which has national legislation that covers all areas of the Convention.

We are prepared to continue to share our experience of national implementation of the Convention with other interested States.

This Review Conference is an ideal opportunity to thoroughly assess all aspects of the implementation of the Convention. There have certainly been some significant



achievements, but there have also been shortcomings and dissatisfaction, and it is precisely the latter which should focus our attention.

The destruction of all categories of chemical weapons must continue to be one of the fundamental objectives of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and must be completed in the shortest possible time, in accordance with the relevant decisions approved by the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council. To do otherwise would be to pose a serious risk to the credibility and integrity of the Convention.

The OPCW has an important role to play in the promotion of States Parties' economic and technological progress, particularly less developed States. This is a permanent, just and legitimate demand from most of the members of the Organisation.

It is regrettable that more than 15 years since the entry into force of the Convention the full implementation of Article XI remains outstanding, despite the fact that its provisions have been one of the main incentives for the decision by many developing countries to adhere to the Convention.

Cuba considers it to be unacceptable that certain States Parties continue to apply unilateral measures which limit, restrict and even prohibit the free trade and transfer among States Parties of substances, equipment and information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes.

The unjust and criminal blockade imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba for more than 50 years represents a flagrant violation of the letter and the spirit of the Convention, particularly Article XI. We demand the immediate removal of these discriminatory restrictions, which are explicitly prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention.

It is an urgent priority to adopt a plan of action for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI, as has been done with other Articles of the Convention. The constant deferral of this plan simply cannot be justified.

Cuba has submitted a detailed proposal for the plan of action and also supported the proposal on Article XI submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement and China. Our voices must be heard and our needs duly taken into account by this Conference.

It is the duty of all to ensure that the final agreements of this meeting clearly define the future guidelines for the OPCW and help to consolidate and reinforce the implementation of the Convention. The basic principle must be to maintain the necessary balance among its four fundamental pillars: destruction, verification, international cooperation and assistance.

Conscious of the challenges that the OPCW must face, Cuba believes that the future of this Organisation must be guided towards the full achievement of the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Any decision on the future development of the OPCW must be adopted in its policy-making organs as a result of an exhaustive, transparent, inclusive and comprehensive deliberation process, based on consensus.

Allow me to conclude, Mr Chairman, by emphasising the willingness of the Cuban delegation to work in an active and constructive manner with you and the other delegations in order that the Third Review Conference produce the results required at the present time. I reiterate that you can count on full support and cooperation from Cuba.

I request that this statement be distributed as an official document of the Conference.

Thank you very much.

--- 0 ---