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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairman,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt congratulations on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am fully confident that this Third Review Conference will be crowned with a great success under your able leadership. My delegation assures you of its full support and cooperation towards a successful outcome of this conference.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, Ambassador of Algeria, Nassima Baghl, for her devotion to the success of the Conference. Thanks to her outstanding stewardship, the result of the Working Group has laid a good basis for our work at this conference. My special thanks also goes to the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his comprehensive and informative report.

Let me also join the other speakers in paying tribute to H.E. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for participating in this conference at this critical moment. I am convinced that his participation represents a renewed commitment to strengthening of the Chemical Weapons Convention regime and it will serve as a great asset to further our discussion over the next two weeks.

In the sixteen years since its entry into force, the Convention has served the international community as one of the main instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

With 188 States Parties unequivocally renouncing the use of toxic chemicals as weapons of warfare, the OPCW has successfully put into effect a comprehensive verification and compliance mechanism to enforce a global ban on one category of weapons of mass destruction in a non-discriminatory fashion and under strict international control.



The Third Review Conference should be a time not only to reflect the progress that we have made so far, but also to provide due guidance on how the OPCW can deal with the challenges ahead and achieve our final goal—a world free of chemical weapons.

Having said that, the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria on the margins of the Review Conference indeed poses a serious threat to what OPCW and its 188 States Parties have achieved to date. Use of chemical weapons by anyone would be reprehensible and can under no circumstances be justified.

The Korean government welcomes United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's decision to work with OPCW to conduct a specialised, impartial and independent investigation into alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria and urges the investigation mission to get to the bottom of the matter, leaving no room for any doubt or suspicion.

This case also reminds us that it is imperative for all the stakeholders—OPCW Director-General, Secretariat and all the State Parties—to further accelerate our concerted efforts towards achieving the universality of the Convention.

It is my delegation's belief that the Third Review Conference should send out a strong message to the eight States not Party including Syria and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, urging them to move towards world security, peace and common prosperity of humanity by signing the Convention without any condition or delay.

My next comment concerns the status of implementation of Article VII. The remarkable achievement in terms of the number of States Parties will not be automatically translated into the global web of enforcement needed for the prevention of chemical weapons and illegal transfer of scheduled chemicals to States not Party. This will require viable legal and administrative measures and public institutions for the implementation of the Convention. In spite of the continuing supports by the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties, my delegation notes with concern that as of 31 December 2012, only less than half of States Parties have adopted legislation or administrative measures that fully implement the Convention. We have not seen much progress in this area since the end of the Second Review Conference.

In this context, we fully support discussing an incremental and tailor-made approach initiated by the Technical Secretariat. We believe that it will help to enhance full and effective national implementation within the extent of each State Party's requirements as they relate to each of the areas set forth by the Convention.

Given the economic and financial crises that still exist in every corner of the globe, my delegation is of the view that we have to continue to optimise our limited human and financial resources without compromising our purposes set forth in the Convention. In this regard, we need to continue to find ways to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of our industrial inspections, which requires continuous cooperation between States Parties and the Technical Secretariat. Today unfortunately, only 52 States Parties allow sequential inspections. The number needs to be increased. In this regard, it is noteworthy that, compared with individual inspection, OCPF sequential inspection reduces the number of inspection days by 25%, according to the Technical Secretariat's report on this matter (RC-3/S/1, dated 12 March 2013).

With regard to verification at combined plant sites, which is an issue under discussion, my delegation believes that it will serve as a useful instrument to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of inspections and will also lessen the burden on the side of the inspected plant site. We hope to see the relevant efforts by the States Parties and the Secretariat come to fruition in the near future.

Finally, the Korean Government recognises the growing importance of international cooperation and assistance activities as a vital catalyst for accomplishing the objective of the Convention and its universality. To this end, the Republic of Korea has been consistently providing support for various international cooperation programs pursuant to Articles VII, X and XI of the Convention. In particular, we are committed to sharing with other States Parties our knowledge and experience in the area of peaceful use and development of chemical technologies, with a view to contributing to practical and faithful implementation of the Convention.

Mr Chairman, in closing, I would like this statement to be treated as an official document of the Third Review Conference. Thank you.

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