



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Third Review Conference
8 – 19 April 2013

RC-3/NAT.53
9 April 2013
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

GUATEMALA

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JORGE ALFREDO LEMCKE ARÉVALO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUATEMALA TO THE OPCW
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairman,

1. I should like to express my most sincere congratulations, personally and on behalf of my delegation, on your election as Chair of this Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.
2. We should also like to acknowledge the outstanding work of Her Excellency Ambassador Nassima Baghli of Algeria, who, as Chair, led the open-ended working group for preparation of the Third Review Conference with commitment and endeavour.
3. Furthermore, I convey my utmost appreciation to Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, Director-General of the Organisation, and to the entire technical and administrative team at the OPCW, as well as my best wishes for great success during this Special Session.
4. We are currently approaching a crucial period in the future of the complete and final destruction of chemical weapons. Failure at the OPCW would be a devastating blow to the very essence and the future of human nature, whose fundamental aspiration is peace. We must not hesitate to demand the fulfilment and implementation of what is laid down by the rules, prioritising and guaranteeing a sufficient balance among the four pillars of the Convention, with a view to enabling full and effective implementation without any kind of discrimination towards the States Parties.
5. With regard to the important matter of the full implementation of Article VII of the Convention, Guatemala is situated on a part of the American continent which is an area that is almost entirely free of weapons of mass destruction. Latin America is proud to have managed to build a tradition and a broad consensus on non-proliferation, and is free of both chemical weapons and biological and nuclear weapons. We urge support of initiatives directed at encouraging States Parties to implement proactive policies which promote the fulfilment of all the provisions of the Convention. For its part, Guatemala has been working to fulfil its commitments deriving from the application of the Convention. It has, inter alia, conducted a profound legal reform, which has allowed it to criminalise, prosecute and punish the crimes specified in the Convention and other international instruments ratified by



Guatemala and incorporated into its domestic legislation; this is the case for the possession, carrying, production and trafficking of chemical and biological weapons and/or weapons of mass destruction, inter alia, as contained in the Law on Arms and Munitions, Decree 15-2009 of the Honourable Congress of the Republic, as well as in other, more recent legislation, such as the Law on Cluster Munitions and/or Explosive Devices, Decree 22-2012. This is a more than clear illustration that we are meeting the commitments we have assumed as a State that is committed to the quest for peace and justice.

6. We support the need to intensify efforts to achieve universality of the Convention and we believe it is important to encourage active collaboration with those States Parties that are in a position to do so. The existence of eight States not Party to the Convention and the rise of radical ideological groups which conduct illegal activities and have considerable economic influence which grants them access to this type of weapons are part of the motivation and commitment to achieve early universality of the Convention.
7. On the important subject of destruction, Guatemala recognises the significant work of the large possessor States of chemical weapons and the enormous efforts they have made to achieve complete destruction of the arsenals within the established deadlines. We urge all the possessor States to continue with full commitment and without exception, motivated by the goal of accomplishing the destruction of all existing chemical weapons in the shortest possible time. With the fulfilment of this objective, much of humanity's faith in a safer future will be restored, in the knowledge that the terrible events of the past will never be repeated. We must not forget the victims, and it is our historical responsibility not only to remember them but to keep their memory alive and to pursue the full implementation of the destruction of all chemical weapons, seeking any existing or other mechanism to reach the ultimate goal of a humanity that is free of all types of weapons of mass destruction.
8. However, work must be done at the same time to prevent the re-emergence of any type of chemical weapons, and we believe that it is necessary to promote greater efficiency in the verification processes, as established in our Convention.
9. In order to achieve these objectives, we believe it is important to continue building national capacities in the fields of assistance and protection, both against chemical weapons and in chemical emergencies in States Parties. We also support the Director-General's proposal on the possibility of setting up regional and subregional centres as necessary.
10. We also support the activities and mechanisms provided for in the decisions of the Conference of the States Parties on aspects of Article XI, as well as all such recommendations necessary for the achievement of the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of this Article.
11. We are committed to continuing to work with the Organisation on all tasks with a view to non-proliferation and disarmament, as instruments for the achievement of a more just and humane life on an international level. At the same time, we take the liberty of encouraging all States Parties to keep intact the spirit of the Convention which governs us, both in the agreements reached during the sessions of the

Conference of the States Parties and in the consensus reached on each and every one of the occasions on which we have gathered within this honourable Organisation.

12. I avail myself of this opportunity to request that this statement be considered as an official document of this Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Thank you very much.

--- 0 ---