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URUGUAY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF URUGUAY
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairman,

I should like to offer you my sincere congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Third Review Conference and assure you of my own support and that of my delegation in the conduct of your work in a setting that is crucial for the OPCW as it faces its Third Review Conference since the entry into force of the Convention in 1997.

I should also like to acknowledge the work of Ambassador Nassima Baghli in the preparatory work for the items on our agenda, who has distinguished herself as Chair of the open-ended working group through her transparency and close collaboration with the States Parties.

Uruguay, in participating in this Conference, cannot ignore the legacy of Latin America and the Caribbean, which region was a forerunner in the context of disarmament initiatives at the level of weapons of mass destruction. It is worth recalling at this point that the Tlatelolco Treaty of 1967 demarcated the first nuclear weapons-free zone in a densely populated area, acting as inspiration for the establishment of other mechanisms.

The critical areas in the universal application of the Convention, which have taken root in the time that has passed since the last (Second) Review Conference, together with the recent events in the Syrian Arab Republic, highlight the humanitarian dimension of our Organisation.

As indicated by the Technical Secretariat in its last report on the status of implementation of the Convention, dated 11 July 2012, since the entry into force more than 78.01% of the declared arsenal has been destroyed on a global level under a strict verification regime, as well as 45.5% of the munitions and containers declared under the Convention.

However, as underlined by the last Review Conference, it will not be possible fully to achieve the objectives of the Convention while there remains even one State not Party that possesses or can access chemical weapons. The reality is that there are eight States that remain outside the scope of the Convention.

In this context, the Conference is facing the renewed challenge of achieving full universality as soon as possible. There is no time for complacency; we must address these situations without delay.



Uruguay stands firm in its support of the paths of communication opened by the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, with States not Party to encourage them to accede to the Convention. However, the burden of this massive task cannot be the principal responsibility of the Technical Secretariat. As States Parties to the Convention we must also involve ourselves directly in the task, especially those that have greater influence, whatever the circumstances, with those which have not yet adhered to our Convention. Fifteen years have passed already since the entry into force of the Convention, and yet, in an area that is so sensitive from the humanitarian perspective, full universality has not been achieved. The recent Supplemental Agreement signed at the United Nations in relation to a State not Party to the Convention is a fine example of the urgency of achieving adhesion thereto as soon as possible.

At the same time, we recognise that the low political visibility of the OPCW in the international arena may be an obstacle to the objective of full universality. What more can be done? Like this Review Conference, all the activities of the policy-making organs of the OPCW are held at its headquarters. Perhaps now is the time to examine alternative proposals, following the practice of other international organisations which, for example, periodically organise their plenary meetings outside their headquarters.

Along the same lines of the recommendation made in 2010 by the Advisory Panel on Future OPCW Priorities, we believe that the role of a special envoy could be useful, particularly in the achievement of universality, which ought to be accomplished before the end of the schedule for the destruction of existing arsenals within the deadlines agreed in the decision of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties (C-16/DEC.16, dated 2 December 2011).

Another cause for concern for our delegation is preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. We acknowledge the enormous progress that has been made from the start in the field of verification. However, even if at a national level we are making progress with a set of legislative and administrative measures, in every region there remains much to be achieved.

With their work in national implementation, the National Authorities are accomplishing an enormous task, which should receive due recognition, achievements as well as problems. At the same time, we cannot ignore the reality of the fact that too many States Parties, more than fifteen years after the entry into force of the Convention, are a long way from having the minimum of what is needed in terms of legislation and administrative measures for the full implementation of the Convention within their national jurisdictions.

As with universality, we believe that new strategies are needed to ensure implementation of the Convention, a task which lies primarily not with the Technical Secretariat but with us, the States Parties. In this context, during the Conference we will promote initiatives of which the aim is for the Technical Secretariat to produce incentives for the States Parties to put in place active policies aimed at full implementation of the provisions of the Convention, particularly those related to Article VII.

In line with its high level of commitment to the Convention, Uruguay has actively participated in the OPCW's international cooperation programmes, pursuant to Article XI. Our country, which belongs to academic and scientific networks in Latin America, promotes the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes, in assistance and protection against chemical

weapons within the framework of the Convention. Naturally, we shall support all the initiatives promoted by this Conference to reinforce such programmes which, in the context of the promotion of States Parties' economic and technological development, are designed to build national capacities through the exchange of scientific and technical information, awarding grants and internships, and support for research projects in the national laboratories.

Uruguay, like other Member States of GRULAC, would like to encourage free trade in chemicals, as well as international cooperation and the exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by the Convention that are designed to promote States Parties' economic and technological development.

For this delegation, there can no longer be any doubt that the promotion of international cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of chemistry must be one of the priorities of the OPCW. As we already know, under Article VIII of the Convention the Conference is responsible for encouraging international cooperation among States Parties, and this is to revolve around two axes:

- supporting the transfer of products and technology, as well as the economic and technological development of such States;
- promoting the peaceful use of chemistry, for which objective the cooperation programmes should have a regular budgetary allocation so as to avoid its continuity depending on voluntary contributions from States Parties.

Article VIII of the Convention is therefore closely linked to Article XI thereof, which acknowledges, on the one hand, the right of the States Parties to conduct research with chemicals, provided that the production and use are compatible with the purposes not prohibited by the Convention; and on the other hand, the promotion of commercial and scientific exchanges in the field of chemistry for industrial, agricultural, medical and pharmaceutical purposes, or in other words, the development of international cooperation among States Parties, which is precisely the central objective of Article VIII of the Convention.

Finally, I should like to express our firm conviction that the recommendations that are eventually approved by this Conference will contain clear guidelines that will govern the future activities of the OPCW. I should also like to express to the Director-General Uruguay's support for the successful implementation of these recommendations under his leadership.

The achievements of the OPCW in preserving the culture of cooperation and the pursuit of consensus in order to accomplish tasks related to peace and security, and more specifically, matters involving disarmament and non-proliferation must be preserved during the Conference. Mr Chairman, you can count on the commitment of Uruguay in this respect.

I should be obliged if this statement could be circulated as an official document of the Third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention.