



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Third Review Conference
8 – 19 April 2013

RC-3/NAT.66
8 April 2013
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

THE STATE OF QATAR

**STATEMENT BY AIR FORCE MAJOR GENERAL NASSER MOHAMED AL-ALI
HEAD OF THE QATARI NATIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE PROHIBITION OF WEAPONS
AT THE THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellency the Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me, on my own behalf and on behalf on the delegation of the State of Qatar, to congratulate you, Excellency Ambassador Mr Krzysztof Paturej of Poland, on your election as Chairperson of the Third Special Session of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We have full confidence in your able and wise leadership in steering the work of this important Conference. We assure you of our continuing cooperation with your efforts to lead our collective endeavours to achieve the desired results.

It is a great honour for me to address this plenary meeting of the Third Review Conference, which is a landmark in the development of the chemical weapons prohibition regime. Although the completion of destruction of declared chemical weapons arsenals has not been achieved yet, we have reached a point where OPCW Member States need to take decisions concerning this regime and potential changes in priorities assigned to its various objectives.

As H.E. the Director-General of the OPCW has stated, in view of the important decisions that it will take and “given the transition that awaits the Organisation, the Third Review Conference obviously assumes critical importance”:

At the same time, the report of the Advisory Panel on Future OPCW priorities calls the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW collectively to begin addressing this transition. I am of the view that, in the process of reviewing the past fifteen years and planning for the future, we need to uphold our tradition of consensual decision-making and work together to chart out a clear roadmap for the future work of this Organization.

The State of Qatar appreciates efforts made, and steps taken, by the OPCW to achieve the universality of the Convention and convince the States which are yet to join the Convention to do so. From this rostrum, we urge these States to take the final steps to join the Convention as early as possible, to make its universality a tangible reality.



We, in the State of Qatar, believe that, fifteen years after its entry into force, the Convention derives its legitimacy from the implementation of the just principles enshrined therein. I can state that the operation of the Convention keeps alive the hope that it will set an example which could inspire the revival of a genuine moral, ethical and legal basis for promoting disarmament and arms control. The State of Qatar continues to pursue the policy of supporting all legal instruments and initiatives that promote disarmament, non-proliferation, and regional and international security on a just and equitable basis, and also recognises the equal rights of all States to safety and security.

I wish to reaffirm at this Third Review Conference that the State of Qatar is committed to the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention, to its full implementation, and to fulfilling all our obligations. This brings me to one of the main issues to be discussed during this Conference, namely the destruction of the existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, which, for the State of Qatar, is a core objective that, as a matter of principle, needs to be achieved as early as possible. We urge all possessor States Parties to destroy their stockpiles in accordance with the plans they have submitted, and within the deadlines approved by the OPCW.

This delegation also wishes to endorse the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

I wish to affirm that the Government of the State of Qatar will continue investing to develop and diversify its industry. This dictates that the tools provided for in the Convention, namely effective implementing measures such as legislation and regulations, be used effectively in order to prevent individuals or entities from stockpiling or using chemical weapons and from assisting or encouraging others, in any way, to do so. Effective national implementation has been a priority for the State of Qatar, which will continue implementing the Convention through further development of national legislation. Recently, the National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons proposed and discussed amendments to the current legislation, with a focus on tighter controls of the import and export of, and licensing for, controlled chemicals.

The recent declaration by the Government of Syria that it possesses chemical weapons poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. We, in the State of Qatar, are of the view that an international solution needs to be pursued for this issue, and that the final report of our conference must contain a language to that effect.

H.E. the Director-General informed the Executive Council during its meeting on 27 March 2013 that he had received from the Secretary-General of the United Nations a request to assist in the conduct of a United Nations investigation on the reported use of chemical weapons in Syria. We are aware that the OPCW has started preparations for the investigation mission. The State of Qatar strongly supports efforts by the Director-General in this respect, and at the same time condemns firmly the use of chemical weapons by any party under any circumstances.

What I have stated on the Syrian chemical weapons brings me to section VII of the Advisory Panel report titled "Preparedness for and Response to Events Involving the Release of Toxic Chemicals for Hostile Purposes", and focusing on the Preparedness of the Technical Secretariat. Preparedness represents one side of the coin. On the other side, the current situation demonstrates clearly the importance of Article X concerning assistance and

protection and the capacity of States Parties to receive such assistance. Syria's neighbouring States pin great hopes on the OPCW to exercise their rights to request and receive assistance. This requires that these States be prepared to receive such assistance when it is delivered to them. Accordingly, the State of Qatar has taken the initiative to develop a special training course on the "delivery and receipt of assistance" and gives priority to holding this course for the States that may be affected by Syrian weapons.

Upholding the provisions on assistance and protection under Article X, the State of Qatar has responded to an OPCW request and, last December, in the presence of H.E. the Director-General of the OPCW, inaugurated the Doha Regional Centre for training on Conventions on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Centre will offer States Parties a number of activities. I take this opportunity to invite States Parties' representatives to approach the Qatari delegation for further information on the Centre, and I confirm that it is fully ready to cooperate with all States Parties with respect to the effective implementation of the Convention.

Supporting the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention is but one of the main objectives of the Doha Regional Centre for training on Conventions on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Centre aims also at supporting verification regimes covering other categories of weapons of mass destruction, as well as conventional disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. It will also host numerous national, regional and international training courses.

I wish to reiterate that the State of Qatar truly believes in the value of international cooperation, that we support the work of the Technical Secretariat in this area. We also appreciate all endeavours aiming at international disarmament.

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished participants,

As I have said earlier in my statement, addressing the report of the Advisory Panel on Future OPCW Priorities is but one of the issues for which ways need to be explored by the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Therefore, we should use our time wisely over the next two weeks to discuss the issue of transition.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, I wish to pledge my personal commitment and that of the Qatari delegation to work closely with you and all attending delegations for a fruitful and successful Conference that will, in turn, provide guidance for our work with respect to the Chemical Weapons Convention in the years to come.

I thank you for your attention and wish you all success.

I wish that this statement be adopted as one of the official documents of this Conference.

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