

PRESENTATION BY PROFESSOR ABDOURAMAN BARY

**CANDIDATE OF BURKINA FASO AND AFRICA FOR THE POSITION OF
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF OPCW**

Your Excellency Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed BELAL, Chairperson of the Executive Council of the OPCW,

Your Excellences distinguished Members of the Executive Council,

It is a great honor for me to stand before you and present my candidacy for the position of Director General. Please, allow me to introduce myself.

I have a strong scientific and technological background in Chemistry combined with an extensive involvement in international affairs related to arms control and disarmament and to global management of toxic or hazardous chemicals. I have a Doctorate in Chemistry and a Doctorate in Materials Science.

I perfectly master the technical dimension of the problem of disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons including the issues of Verification. I hold the Certificate of Chemical Weapons Analyst of one of the world's most recognized chemical weapons verification Institution, the Finnish Institute for the Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN). In addition, I hold the Certificate of Environmental Radioactivity and Radionuclide Monitoring for the Verification of the CTBT from the Institute for Atmospheric Radioactivity of Freiburg, Germany, and the United Nations Certificate of Weapons Inspector of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC).

I also master the political dimension of the issues of disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons. Having had to lead the delegation of Burkina Faso to the Conferences of States Parties of the OPCW, I actively participated in the negotiations and the decision-making process at a high level. On this occasion, I demonstrated that I have strong negotiation skills and good judgment in applying expertise to complex and sensitive issues.

This double mastery of technical and political issues, gained through a long and rich experience of the problems of disarmament and non-proliferation, gives me the capacity and the openness that are key to understanding the stakes of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in their technical and political dimensions. This profile makes me particularly capable of leading the OPCW Secretariat in fulfilling its mission of ensuring a credible and transparent regime to verify the destruction of chemical weapons and prevent their re-emergence.

As Head of the Delegation of Burkina Faso to the Conferences of States Parties, I have established a fruitful dialogue in the negotiations with all States Parties. This open-mindedness

has enabled me to benefit from the confidence of both developing and developed countries, as I have always worked for the interests of the Organization and defended the principle of equal application of the provisions of the Convention to all States Parties.

Honorable Members of the Executive Council,

After two decades of work, the OPCW has achieved remarkable success at the service of the international community and the Organization has gained a deserved reputation of a model disarmament and non-proliferation entity. More than 95% of the declared stockpiles of chemical weapons have been eliminated under the robust and credible verification regime laid down in the Convention. This marks an important milestone on the way to ensuring a world free of chemical weapons, but still challenges remain for the Organization in terms of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. To overcome these challenges the organization needs to be dynamic and adaptable.

I believe that reaching full universality is among the most important **challenges and future priorities of the OPCW**. Despite the progress made so far, few countries are still outside the Organization, hence there is a potential of having stockpile of chemicals weapons not destroyed, and chemical industries not verified. Reaching full universality would give even more credibility to the verification regime and will make a substantial contribution to enhancing global security. Two countries in Africa are still outside the Convention. I am the candidate of the African Union and if appointed as Director General I will immediately engage with this Organization to take advantage of regional political dynamics in the region, as well as in other regions to make progress. In a similar way, I will also engage with all regional groups in a spirit of multilateralism.

While shifting the focus from disarmament to non-proliferation and prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons, one key priority will be strengthening the capabilities of Parties for national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The success of the verification regime of the (CWC) rests on its effective implementation at the national level. This is particularly important in the context of the emergence of new contemporary threats related to chemical terror. Progress toward full national implementation of the Convention includes the strengthening of the national legal and institutional framework for implementation of the Convention, as well as enhancing technical capabilities of State Parties. I have worked on the implementation of the Convention in my country as the Head of the National Authority. I therefore understand the challenges that this poses in a developing country context, and will thus be better prepared to support States Parties in this regard.

Another priority can be linked to one of the fundamental pillars of the OPCW's work that is encouraging international cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry to promote technological and economic development. I come from a Least Developed country. I have always been confronted with development problems. I therefore have a personal and natural sensitivity to

these issues beyond purely professional obligations. My long and successful 20-year career as a Researcher in Chemistry is an asset to help the OPCW develop relevant capacity-building programs in the fields of the peaceful uses of chemistry.

To best serve the State Parties as an efficient platform for the deliberation to achieve the objective and purpose of the Convention, the Secretariat will need to be flexible and adaptable, while being managed in a creative way based on the best management and good governance principles and values including respect for diversity, professionalism, and integrity. Particular attention should be given to gender equity. Giving chances to disabled persons to bring their skills to the work of the Secretariat is also important. In a context of a global financial crisis the Secretariat needs to be results - oriented and achieve the best possible results with the resources made available by State Parties. In all the positions I have served, both nationally and internationally, I have been noticed by all for my outstanding achievements and my personal and human qualities. I am a person combining rigor and consensus-seeking in honesty, probity, integrity and competence.

Distinguished Members of the Executive Council,

Preparing the Organization for its role in the post chemical weapons era will not be an easy task. Extreme vigilance will be needed as new chemicals are introduced into commerce each year worldwide, and the trends of the global chemical industry are evolving at a fast pace. Furthermore the task will be increasingly complex in the context on new scientific and technological development, and emergence of new security and terror challenges involving Non-State actors. Overcoming these challenges will require strengthening and expanding partnerships with all Stakeholders including academia, industry, research, civil society and other International Organizations.

I am fully and humbly aware of the heavy responsibilities of the Director General of the OPCW, and I am prepared to serve the Organization at the best of my dedication, bringing with me energy and enthusiasm to meet the challenge of implementing the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) with the ultimate aim of contributing to international security and stability, comprehensive chemical disarmament, and global economic development, working with all actors in a spirit of inclusive consultation, transparency, non-discrimination and consensus building.

Thank you very much.