



**ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

**Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention  
and Chemical Safety and Security Management  
for  
Member States of the OPCW in the Asia Region**

ADDRESS BY  
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**Doha, Qatar, 11 December 2012**

Major General Hamad bin Ali al-Attiyah, Chief of Staff of Qatar  
Armed Forces

H.E.Ambassador Hamad Ali al-Hanzab, Ambassador of the State of  
Qatar in The Hague,

Brigadier General Nasser Mohamed al-Ali, Chairman of the National  
Committee for Prohibition of Weapons,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is indeed a great pleasure and an honour to be in Doha. I welcome you all to this seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and chemical safety and security management for Member States of OPCW in the Asian Region.
2. The relationship between the OPCW and Qatar is strong and growing. It is characterised by Qatar's consistent support for the Convention, evident in the numerous events it has hosted, of which this important seminar is the latest manifestation.
3. Indeed Qatar is assuming a leading role in promoting the implementation of the Convention.
4. Greater regional interaction amongst the various stakeholders of the Convention including the national authorities is a need that has been expressed very clearly in the recently held workshops on Article XI. The events organised in Qatar go a long way in supporting this objective.

5. Qatar has additionally proposed to host a regional centre for CWC which would be extended to cover other weapons of mass destruction. This is an encouraging development.
6. The National Authority of Qatar has also supported the industry segment of the Associate Programme. I wish to recognise the two companies concerned, namely Qatar Fertilizers and Qatar Vinyl.
7. It is highly encouraging to see so many participants from the Member States in the region attending this seminar. The topic of chemical safety and security management is assuming greater importance in the work of the OPCW. This trend can be explained in terms of the evolving nature of expectations of our States Parties, which in turn are shaped by the shifting geographical footprint of the chemical industry as well as contemporary threat perceptions.
8. The Asian region has a strong chemical industry. It is growing further as more and more production capacity shifts to Asia. The region which, until recently, had a share of only 15 percent in global chemicals production; now contributes approximately 49 percent and this figure is expected to rise to 66 percent by the year 2030. The management of chemicals, safely and securely, is therefore an issue of growing importance. It involves the establishment of proper procedures, the adoption of good practices, training, staff development and continual oversight. Combined; these concepts are described as a safety and security culture. Promotion of this all-embracing awareness and associated practices is something that the OPCW can productively contribute towards.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. The OPCW has made significant progress towards fulfilling its mandate in different areas. The Convention is now close to obtaining universal adherence, with a membership that currently stands at 188 countries making it one of the most successful disarmament and non-proliferation treaties.
10. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is recognised as a serious global challenge. The international community remains concerned with the possibility of terrorists or criminal groups acquiring nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. In the context of the CWC, the concerns today mainly relate to the possibility of misuse of toxic chemicals or attacks on facilities that produce or store such chemicals as well as during transportation of chemicals.
11. It is in this environment of heightened concern that the OPCW is expected to play its part and offer its States Parties programmes and activities that serve to strengthen their security in a broad sense of the term.
12. The OPCW is actively committed to supporting the legitimate aspirations of all its States Parties with respect to Articles X (Assistance and Protection) and XI (International Cooperation). These two “pillars” of the Convention will remain a priority for the Organisation and we will continue to provide an adequate level of

programmes aimed at building national and regional capacities in our Member States.

13. During the 16th Session of the Conference of States Parties, a decision was adopted on a framework for the full implementation of Article XI. Some of the concrete steps that have been identified in that decision that relate to OPCW's support for the promotion of chemical safety and security are national capacity-building for the research, development, storage, production and safe use of chemicals. These also include promoting networking and exchange among relevant institutions. As means to identify specific measures, the decision envisages inputs from National Authorities and a needs assessment on the tools and guidance that would be helpful for promoting chemical safety and security. The Secretariat has also been asked to cooperate with and provide advice to the National Authorities with a view to finding non-toxic chemical substitutes to reduce the risks associated with toxic chemicals. Furthermore, the Conference recommends assisting the National Authorities in the development of chemical safety and security education and training programmes as well as outreach activities in the field of integrated chemical management. And finally, the decision recommends providing access to technical data, tools, guidance, and other references for departments of chemistry and other relevant institutions in developing countries. It would be very useful for this Seminar to consider the next steps that will help implement this important decision of the Conference.

14. This seminar is part of the international cooperation activities of the OPCW that focus on industry-related aspects of the

implementation of the Convention. The Technical Secretariat is collaborating with a number of industry associations including the International Council of Chemical associations (ICCA). This includes cooperation for the purpose of promoting in different regions best practices including the Responsible Care programme. Member States have come forward in increasing numbers to support these activities.

15. The emerging economies typically have a mix of small and large chemical facilities. While large companies tend to be more resourceful and therefore better organised, small and medium enterprises generally require more guidance, support and understanding of safety and security issues. Initiatives that contribute to strengthening the ability of enterprises to make their operations safe and secure are therefore not only desirable; they are necessary.
16. Indeed, in the case of the CWC, together with cooperation between States Parties, the continued involvement and support of the chemical industry is vital to our success. Let me therefore extend a very warm welcome to the representatives of the Qatari chemical industry and express, on behalf of the OPCW, our deep appreciation for their support in organising this seminar.
17. Many developing countries among the Member States of the OPCW have emerging chemical industries. They are keen to adopt the best practices in chemical safety management. Countries also seek the safe use of chemicals to meet a number of challenges in such areas as health and the environment. These are areas that can

benefit significantly from synergies derived from the endeavours of governments, the industry and the OPCW. The notion of a systematic propagation of chemical safety and security practices in which the OPCW plays its due part is gaining greater support amongst our States Parties.

18. On its part, the Organisation seeks greater coordination and cooperation from both States Parties and stakeholder communities in order to best fulfil their expectations. It is my hope that the proceedings of this Seminar will contribute towards this end. This is an opportunity to share your experiences on some of the best practices in specific issues of safety and security management related to chemical processes. The event should also seek to generate recommendations concerning activities that the Organisation can sponsor or support in the future with a view to fostering cooperation between Member States, between National Authorities, chemical associations and the chemical industry. I feel confident that with your inputs and support the objective of promoting chemical safety and security can be promoted in a manner where the concerned parties can derive maximum benefit.

19. While all of you will no doubt work hard over the course of this Seminar, I ask you to also fully enjoy the traditionally warm hospitality being extended by our hosts for which I take this opportunity to express my own appreciation and gratitude.

20. I thank all of you for your presence here and look forward to your contributions. I wish the seminar success. I express my gratitude once again to our Qatari hosts.

Thank you.