



**WILTON PARK CONFERENCE**

**THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: THIRD REVIEW  
CONFERENCE AND BEYOND  
(15-17 OCTOBER 2012)**

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REMARKS  
TALKING POINTS**

- I have the pleasure to be visiting Wilton Park once again. I wish to express my appreciation for hosting this important Conference; which is timely and confirms the important role Wilton Park plays in providing its inputs to global policy debates.
- I thank the governments of the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States for sponsoring the event.
- As you are all experts and practitioners in the field, I will not make any remarks that are of an introductory nature to the CWC and the work of the OPCW. Taking advantage of the format of this Conference which encourages a candid exchange of views and ideas; I will highlight what, in my view, constitute the critical issues facing the Organisation at this important juncture.
- Indeed, the upcoming Third Review Conference will take place at a defining moment for the OPCW.
- There are two dominant factors that will impact the Organisation. Its imminent transition and, the circumstances of the economic and financial crisis. The transition needs to be viewed as a positive development. It is on the horizon because of the success of the OPCW towards realising a core objective of the Convention, namely, chemical disarmament. The financial challenge on the other hand injects an element of uncertainty and will have to be managed carefully.
- Just as a preface, I would say that the OPCW is as much a political body as it is a technical one. This is not to suggest a negative.

Quite the contrary, it is the solid political will shown by States Parties that has established the OPCW's reputation as a success in multilateralism. The fact that the OPCW was able to take its decision by consensus, with a few exceptions, is a clear testimony to this political will. I believe it is unique with its consensual approach.

- But to view the work of the Organisation through a purely political lens can become a hindrance. So, as we approach important decision points, States Parties would do well to bear in mind that collective decisions are of collective benefit. Such decisions can never run contrary to the interests of any individual State Party. And to my knowledge there had been no such decision in the history of the OPCW. So a dispassionate objective, and open-minded approach to what is needed to keep the Convention effective will serve the collective good. Granted that in the real world, it is sometimes not possible to avoid externalities from affecting our work. But it is important to minimise the influence of external political factors on the operation of the Convention.
- A case on point is the supplementary agreement the Secretariat recently signed with the UN. The agreement establishes the necessary modalities for conducting an investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons if requested by the UN Secretary General. The agreement is a necessity if the Convention is to be implemented in such situations. It was concluded after extended discussions. On the other hand, some have seen the timing as coinciding with a particular situation in the Middle East. This single focus tends to detract from our work. The Secretariat has a responsibility to demonstrate its readiness to conduct any operation or activity that is foreseen in the Convention.
- Another point relevant to the overall political approach of States Parties is the matter of national priorities as opposed to the collective ones which are reflected in the agreed set of core objectives of the CWC. It is understandable that different States Parties or group of States Parties attach a different degree of importance to various aspects of the Convention. But what we need to ensure is that all of them take total ownership of the entire Convention. The Convention has various articles and annexes which are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Aiming to implement the Convention as a whole will sustain support for some certain crucial programmes. One of these, for example, is the

implementation of Article VII on National Implementation. This must not be seen as an agenda that some seek to impose on others. We all stand to benefit from effective national implementation of the Convention and should continue to assign it high priority while avoiding the perception that this will be at the expense of other programmes. Just the opposite will occur. Those States Parties who are able to enforce the Convention domestically will benefit more from what OPCW offers. The Technical Secretariat will be proactive and try to develop innovative ways such as the instrumental approach or mentorship to improve the national implementation. But influencing the decision making in the countries concerned is a challenge and we will need the support of the States Parties. The capitals should discuss the issue as a priority so that we will have a better chance to succeed.

- That the OPCW faces an imminent transition is now widely understood. What we need is clarity and a common understanding of the nature of that change and the challenges it entails. This should help clarify the very real policy decisions that will be needed to ensure that we manage change in a systematic and orderly fashion. Change by design as the Advisory Panel suggests. The essence of the Convention is to make the ban on chemical weapons last for ever. Every measure that will strengthen this goal is to be welcomed. Every step, that might erode it is to be avoided.
- We cannot deny that the global financial crisis requires us to tighten our belts and to reduce expenditures. But a narrow focus on reductions could impede substantive priorities. We need to proceed with care and caution. It is important to maintain the viability of our programme delivery functions and the delicate balances that have been created over the years in assigning various priorities to different programmes. The future needs to be viewed not merely from the perspective of cost savings but how the transition can be made smooth and orderly and how the knowledge, experience and responsibility to deliver can be best harnessed. Collaboration, and a pro-active rather than passive approach must define our collective approach in dealing with the transition.
- So what in practical terms are the key policy issues?
- The single most important factor that defines the transition is the fact that a task that has consumed the bulk of our resources so far,

verification of destruction of declared stockpiles of chemical weapons will diminish significantly in the years ahead. So much so that we anticipate that in the next 3 to 4 years, there will be only one chemical weapons destruction site that will be active at any given time. There will be some verification work that will continue on destruction of abandoned chemical weapons; but nothing that will require the long term presence of inspectors to verify destruction activities.

- Therefore, while destruction of chemical weapons will remain a priority, the actual quantum of associated work will be limited. By the time of the Fourth Review Conference in 2018, a much less percentage of our resources will need to be devoted to verification of destruction. The blue print for the future of the Organisation will have to be established before that and the opportunity to do so is offered by the forthcoming Review Conference next year.
- If the Convention had been designed to simply eliminate declared stockpiles of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities, then the OPCW would have fulfilled its mission with the destruction of the last declared quantity of chemical weapons. The Convention in reality represents a permanent guarantee against chemical weapons. We need to keep it strong by our reaffirming our commitment to its goals; and keep it relevant, by our readiness to adapt to contemporary and future needs.
- In this sense the first area that I will touch upon is also the most obvious one. In most discussions that concern the Organisation's future, it is asserted, and rightly so, that the long term goal of the Convention will focus on preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons.
- This is a notion that is wider than non-proliferation. In the context of the CWC, it can cover industry verification, data monitoring; nationally and by the Organisation, effective national implementation and dissemination of the ethical norms of the Convention.
- Effectiveness of industry verification in turn is dependant on declarations. This in itself is an area where we need to reflect and deliberate carefully and to improve upon considerably. The key questions here relate to improving the completeness, the quality and the accuracy of declarations together with the timeliness with

which they are submitted. The focus and intensity of inspections of the chemical industry also needs to be kept under review. Some States Parties also have national control mechanisms. They are useful. But I believe they can not be a substitute for the Art VI verification regime and vice versa. Art VI control mechanisms should be seen as a supplementary tool to national control. In short, the key question that we face is how to reinforce the value of Article VI inspections in a manner where States Parties are generally confident in the effectiveness of the regime; now and in the future.

- The Convention primarily serves a security purpose and the OPCW is primarily a security organisation. This character of the Organisation will not change. At the same time, it needs to be remembered that a majority of States Parties to the CWC are developing countries who do show a great deal of interest in OPCW's international cooperation activities. Sustaining the support from this large group of states will require continued attention and improvements in our cooperation programmes. Our work in this area as well as in assistance and protection has been a key factor in the near-universal adherence that the Convention enjoys today.
- Assistance and protection and the implementation of the related Article X of the Convention represent an excellent example of how we can make adjustments to accommodate evolving conditions, perceptions and demands. Over the years the approach of States Parties to assistance and protection issues seems to have shifted from the classical concern about the use of chemical weapons in a battlefield situation to lower intensity incidents mostly in the form of threats from non-state actors. This could include the possible use of industrial toxic chemicals.
- The changing nature of perceptions and threat assessment gives rise to a two-fold challenge:
- First. Establishing effective coordination with others; as a number of international agencies also have a mandate to deal with prevention and consequence mitigation in the event of terrorist use of biological or chemical weapons.
- And Second. There is a clear increase in expectations from the OPCW in the context of developing the capacity of national

response teams and systems. The Organisation on its part seeks to focus on developing greater coordination at the regional or sub-regional level. I believe this is the only way to have a sustainable emergency response capability.

- The first OPCW training course for instructors in assistance-and-protection will take place at OPCW Headquarters in November in The Hague. This will be a pilot project with certain unique features added to the training especially its orientation as a 'train the trainers programme'.
- This leads me to another topic which has of late assumed significance for similar reasons. This is the question of safety and security against the hostile use of toxic chemicals or preventing chemical accidents.
- The demand for OPCW's role in this area comes from States Parties. In order to assess an appropriate role of the Organisation in chemical safety and security that would build on our strengths and avoid duplication with other efforts, an internal cross-divisional Task Force is functioning within the Secretariat.
- This is an area where we will seek to develop further our traditionally close cooperation with the chemical industry.
- I should stress here that OPCW's involvement in safety and security is not meant to establish any new standards or to interfere with the regimes already in place in the industry.
- It is simply to offer a service to our States Parties who wish to benefit from existing best practices. This is the orientation of our current programmes in safety and security and this is how it will remain in the future with benefits going primarily to small and medium size enterprises in developing countries.
- In countries with economies in transition, effective national legislation and controls and good safety and security practices combine to raise prospects for further investments in the chemical sector.
- Another notion that is integral to the objective of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons concerns raising the level of awareness about the ethical norms of the Convention. This is true

especially for scientists and engineers and academics. In my view this aspect should constitute one of our future priorities in terms of strengthening our outreach activities and contributing to education.

- This takes me to the useful role that the civil society, in particular academic institutions like IUPAC and think tanks have been playing. They have provided valuable inputs during the negotiating phase and mutually in the implementation. At a time of change we have shared improved ways to enhance States Parties.
- Although the core objectives of the Convention covered a range of activities, dominant attention was obviously paid to destruction and verification. So as we look at the post-destruction phase, a clear road map needs to be established. A common understanding about future priorities is what in short is expected of the Third Review Conference. This should accompany a consensus on adequate resource allocation and structure of the organisation. The forthcoming Review Conference therefore provides an invaluable opportunity to sharpen the vision for the future of the Convention and the OPCW.
- The Technical Secretariat is one of the three organs of the OPCW. The structure of the Organisation has so far mirrored the priorities set by Policy Making Organs. It will need to gradually adopt itself to the post destruction phase to reflect the new balance to be established. For instance we have at present 120 inspectors. We may need more in the next 2 to 3 years. But if the end of the destruction occurs abruptly in one of the major Possessor States as current plans suggest we will have little time to adopt. Only 40 inspectors will be required for Art VI and 20 to 30 for ACWs, OCWs and the facilities in United States. We will need reliable forecasts in destruction in order to plan and additional resources to expand certain activities during this period to prepare ourselves for a parachute landing, the challenge will still be how to retain expertise.
- I have chosen in my presentation to flag the salient issues before us. I would very much welcome your comments, observations or questions.

Thank you.