



**OPCW**

**Technical Secretariat**

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**SUMMARY REPORT  
OF THE SINGAPORE REGIONAL FORUM 2000  
SINGAPORE, 3 - 5 MAY, 2000**

1. The Government of Singapore and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) organised a regional forum, for representatives of governments and the chemical industry in the Asia-Pacific region, on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the "Convention"), in Singapore from 3 - 5 May 2000. Seventy-two participants from 23 Member States - Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Laos, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan and Uzbekistan - representing government departments and agencies, as well as chemical industries, attended the forum.
2. The workshop provided a framework within which government officials involved in the implementation of the Convention and representatives of the chemical industry could discuss and share their experiences of implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention in the Asia-Pacific region. This was the first such workshop in Asia which enabled those with "hands-on" experience of implementing the Convention to share their experiences and to exchange ideas with other participants.
3. The workshop was jointly opened by Mr Zainul Abdin Rasheed, Singapore's Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Director-General of the OPCW, Mr John Gee. In his keynote address Mr Rasheed noted both Singapore's status as a declared non-possessor State Party and his country's pledges pursuant to Article X of the Convention, as well as his country's hopes for universality in the ASEAN region. The Deputy Director-General expressed the OPCW's hopes for universality in Asia, highlighting the adverse consequences for States which have so far neither ratified nor acceded to the Convention. He presented an overview of the progress made towards achieving universality, and discussed the progress achieved in building the OPCW as an effective global disarmament organisation. In a separate welcome address, the Director of Singapore's National Authority, Dr Lee Fook Kay, outlined Singapore's progress in meeting its obligations under the Convention.

4. The programme covered a range of issues of national, regional and global significance, and also addressed specific concerns relating to the role of industry in the implementation of the Convention. The workshop also interspersed presentations with panel discussions on the issues at hand - namely the experiences of National Authorities, declaration requirements and the identification of declarable activities; the receiving of routine inspections, as well as escort procedures and inspection equipment; the protection of confidential information collected for verification purposes and the procedures applied by the OPCW in this regard; the role of industry in implementing the Convention; trade in scheduled chemicals, including the prohibitions regarding transfers of Schedule 2 chemicals to States not party to the Convention; the OPCW legislation package and support available for the preparation of national legislation; and international cooperation pursuant to Article XI of the Convention. The Government of Singapore sponsored a session on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) which was conducted by an expert in the field who presented an overview of the BTWC Protocol, gave examples of areas in which the BTWC Protocol can benefit from the practical experience of the implementation of the Convention, and outlined the Protocol's perspective on declarations and inspections. A presentation was also made on the assistance provisions of Article X of the Convention.
5. The question of the methods for ensuring complete and accurate industrial declarations generated intense discussion. Aspects of legislation were also discussed, including the possible harmonisation of legislative approaches. The meeting highlighted the need for additional training opportunities for personnel from National Authorities and for support with the organisation of national awareness-raising and training activities.
6. The participants' evaluation of the workshop was very positive. Participants felt that they had gained a good deal from the workshop, and that they had benefited from the presentations and exchanges of experience. Furthermore, good relations among Member States, and between them and their chemical industries, seemed to have benefited significantly from the workshop, whose success was to a significant degree the result of the excellent preparations undertaken by the organisers in Singapore and the working conditions provided for the workshop.