



OPCW

Technical Secretariat

External Relations Division

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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

**OPCW HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK
1 OCTOBER 2012**

1. The date 29 April 2012 marked the completion of fifteen years of operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”). The Convention represents an unqualified success in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and is a testament to effective multilateralism in the service of international peace and security.
2. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), with its 188 Member States, acts as the custodian of this important international treaty. The commitment of States Parties to both the Convention and the work of the OPCW has been crucial and will remain so for the continuing effectiveness of this unprecedented instrument.
3. With complete elimination of declared chemical weapons in sight, the long-term goal of universality of the Convention and prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons will assume centrality in the work of the OPCW. In this context, it is crucial to ensure that the prohibitions of the Convention be upheld for all times to come and that the Organisation continue to provide an assurance of security to its States Parties against both conventional and non-conventional chemical threats.
4. The implementation of the Convention since its entry into force is proof that disarmament succeeds. Attention and commitment at the highest levels in governments will ensure its enduring validity as a barrier against an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. In this context, the OPCW is organising a high-level meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 1 October 2012, coinciding with the opening of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The theme of the meeting is: “Fifteen Years of the Chemical Weapons Convention: Celebrating success. Committing to the Future.”
5. The purpose of the meeting is to generate support for the long-term objectives of the Convention and also to provide impetus to the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, scheduled to be convened in April 2013.



6. The Director-General has invited the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of all States Parties to the Convention to attend. The United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr Ban Ki-moon, will open the meeting together with the Director-General and will deliver an address.
7. Subsequently, the floor will be opened for interventions by Ministers attending the meeting. In order to allow the general debate to be completed within the time frame envisaged, statements may not exceed seven minutes. The order of speakers will be established on a first-come-first-served basis. At the end of the meeting, a commemorative declaration is expected to be issued.
8. The meeting, which will be conducted in English, will be open to attendance by representatives of States not Party, observers, and international, regional, and subregional organisations, and is scheduled to be convened on 1 October 2012 from 15:00 in Conference Room 2.
9. Confirmations of attendance and enquiries may be addressed to the Government Relations and Political Affairs Branch, External Relations Division. The contact persons are Mr Malik Ellahi, Head, Government Relations and Political Affairs Branch, who can be reached at +31 (0)70 416 3836, or via email at malik.ellahi@opcw.org, and Ms Vera Hanus, Political Affairs Officer, Government Relations and Political Affairs Branch, who can be reached at + 31 (0)70 416 3023, or via email at vera.hanus@opcw.org.

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