



## Statement to the United States Delegation Executive Council Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Fifty-Fourth Session

**Ambassador Eric M. Javits, Head of the U.S Delegation**  
The Hague, Netherlands  
October 14, 2008

(As Delivered)

Madame Chairperson, Mr. Director-General, distinguished delegates:

It is always a pleasure to see so many friends and colleagues coming together again here in the leper room. I want to extend a warm welcome to the new delegates, especially newly arrived ambassadors who are attending their very first Executive Council session.

Our last Executive Council meeting in June was a notable success. We completed a significant number of actions and concluded on time. I believe that much of this success can be credited to the enthusiastic engagement of our able new Chairperson, Ambassador Oksana Tomova, with strong support from the Vice Chairmen and the Technical Secretariat, as well as to the commitment by all delegations to work cooperatively and constructively. I very much look forward to this week's session continuing this gratifying precedent of solid accomplishment.

As always, I pledge my personal commitment and that of my delegation to work closely with you, Chairperson Tomova, and with the other members of the Council, to make this a productive and successful session.

Since our last meeting, quietly and without the public recognition it rightly deserves, a State Party completed the destruction of its entire chemical weapons stockpile becoming the second State Party to do so, and before its deadline. We extend our warmest congratulations and deep appreciation for a job well done. With this accomplishment, we were brought one step closer to achieving a world without chemical weapons.

I also would like to thank the Chairperson and members of the Council, the Director-General, and the officials from the Technical Secretariat who visited the Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility at Shchuchye in the Russian Federation last month on behalf of the Council. The United States was pleased to send a senior representative as a member of the group. I would also like to thank the Russian Government for hosting the visit. This visit, like the earlier one to the Anniston facility in the United States, is an important part of the series of exchanges which contribute to confidence building, and which demonstrate the commitment of the United States and the Russian Federation to the complete destruction of their stockpiles.

For the United States, I am pleased to reiterate Dr. Hopkins' announcement yesterday that we will host the next visit by an Executive Council delegation to Pueblo, Colorado and Umatilla, Oregon during the first week of June 2009. As Dr. Hopkins reported, we have now destroyed over 55 percent of our stockpile, have completed operations at our Newport facility, and have destroyed over 95 percent of our total stockpile of nerve agent. We have worked hard to eliminate the weapons of greatest risk first, and now continue to make steady progress on eliminating our remaining stockpile.

While no new states have joined the Chemical Weapons Convention since June, the Dominican Republic has moved one step closer in its legislative process toward completing its accession. The Bahamas, Iraq, and Lebanon are also very close to completing the final steps of accession, and we urge all of these states to do so as soon as possible. This Organization is drawing close to its longstanding goal of universal membership in the Convention, and all of us should redouble our efforts to encourage the remaining eleven states to join with the rest of the world community in banning chemical weapons forever.

Madame Chairperson,

We have a very full agenda this week, but our most important task is agreement on the draft Programme of Work and Budget for 2009 so that it may be forwarded to the Conference of the States Parties.

The budget deliberations are progressing well under the able leadership of the facilitator, Mr. Martin Strub of Switzerland, and we thank him for his service to our Organization. My government applauds the Director-General and his staff for once again producing a balanced, zero nominal growth budget that continues to fully meet all of the Organization's core objectives efficiently and economically. And, within this frugal framework, the Director-General has even managed to provide increases for some important programs, including International Cooperation and Assistance and Article VI inspections, specifically for Other Chemical Production Facilities. We, the Executive Council, owe it to each other and the Technical Secretariat to make every effort to finalize our consideration of the budget at this session of the Executive Council and transmit it to the Conference of the States Parties for approval, just as we did last year.

I am concerned, however, that this may be no easy task. We deeply appreciate the thoughtful work of the Technical Secretariat in its development of the Proposed Budget Adjustment documents that were circulated during the budget consultations last week. The proposed draft adjustments for the 2009 budget indicate that States Parties' assessed contributions will go up by 0.8 percent when compared to the initial draft budget circulated in June. In these daunting days of global economic dread and disruption, this increase, indeed any increase, in member assessments will be difficult for a number of member states and one that I regret the United States can not support.

One of the proposals in the new budget adjustments is funding for one additional meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board, something that we have advocated for a long time due to the number of advances in the areas of science and technology that impact implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Absent the assessment increase that would allow this to be funded in the budget, the United States would be willing to offer half the voluntary funding to help pay for a second meeting next year and would urge other states to offer voluntary funding as well.

Before and during the Second Review Conference, we labored arduously on a number of very difficult issues and achieved a balanced text in the end. One of those clusters of issues surrounded the inspection of Other Chemical Production Facilities (OCPFs). The Review Conference report outlined the need for further work in several areas, including selection of plant sites for inspection that would take into account the risk posed by the relevant chemical, the characteristics of the facility and the nature of its activities (9.54). It urged States Parties to continue their ongoing discussion concerning the question of frequency of inspections of all plant sites (9.56). It also stressed the need for improvement and efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Article VI verification system, including increasing its efficiency and effectiveness (9.57). The Review Conference reiterated the request of the Executive Council for early resumption of consultations on the OCPF site selection methodology (9.64). These are all inter-related aspects of a complex problem that requires much more work on our part as member states and by the Technical Secretariat.

In this regard, we welcome the initiative taken by the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat in proposing actions to enhance OCPF Declarations, which we will consider this session. I was also heartened by the positive tone of the recent Industry Cluster meeting during which many States Parties expressed their willingness to re-

energize discussions on these issues. Under the leadership of the Vice-Chairman for Industry Issues, Ambassador Benchaa Dani of Algeria, I have full confidence that the renewed Industry Cluster facilitations will labor diligently to achieve progress on some longstanding issues. It is a testament to our Organization that delegates are volunteering to take on these challenging facilitations. We welcome the offers of Mr. Marthinus Van Schalkwyk of South Africa, Mr. Giuseppe Cornacchia of Italy, and Ms. Diana Gosens of the Netherlands to lead industry facilitations. We wish them every success. I encourage others of our talented delegates to volunteer for the remaining outstanding issues. The United States attaches great importance to industry issues and values their contributions to supporting the non-proliferation mandate of the Convention, as reaffirmed most recently by the Second Review Conference.

One issue that the Review Conference did not address specifically is very much a part of our budget deliberations at this Council – the overall number of inspections, including OCPF sites. As we begin work on enhancing declarations, refining the site selection methodology, and evaluating the frequency of inspections, we should support the Director-General's proposal for increasing the current number of inspections. The OCPF sites inspected yearly – some 128 now – represent a drop in the bucket – three percent or less -- of the thousands of such plants worldwide. The United States fully supports up to 20 additional OCPF inspections for this year, but only as an interim and precautionary measure, while we earnestly pursue facilitations to enhance declaration information to enable the Technical Secretariat to winnow out those OCPFs that are of least concern. This prudent step is not to set a fixed level at all, but should be discussed each year depending on – and profiting from – the experience of the newly introduced trial site selection methodology; and any decisions taken should result from facilitation deliberations. Hopefully, we will gain greater insight into the number of inspections needed annually as we develop improved methods of determining sites of lesser concern and zeroing in on sites of greater relevance to the Convention.

Madame Chairperson,

We would like to welcome the progress made on Article VII implementation over the past year, as highlighted in the Article VII report before us in this session. While we still have much work to accomplish, it is noteworthy that four States Parties designated National Authorities and a number of additional States Parties enacted domestic implementing legislation during the reporting period. We welcome the ongoing consultations on Article VII under the able facilitation of Mr. Said Moussi of Algeria.

Since our last session, consultations have also continued on implementation of Articles X and XI as well as Universality under our able and experienced facilitators Mr. Victor Smirnovsky of Russia, Mr. Li Hong of China, and Mr. Lee Litman of the United Kingdom. Warm thanks to all of our facilitators for their dedication and creativity in moving forward the work on these important elements of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We look forward to continuing to work with them toward solid accomplishment of our common goals.

In line with the Second Review Conference, this organization needs to be able to attract, develop and retain motivated staff of the highest caliber. In order to do this effectively, we must continue to ensure that the OPCW remains an attractive employer. While the proposed transfer agreement between the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and the OPCW Provident Fund has been postponed from our agenda this week, we believe that it will provide an additional incentive for recruiting and retaining the best and most-qualified staff to work in the Technical Secretariat. We look forward to discussing this proposal at our next session.

On a more sobering subject, I find it sad, yet an unfortunate reality, that even once all declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been destroyed by the member states, the people of our global community may still be threatened by the possibility that individuals, cults, criminals or terrorists may nevertheless use chemicals in a hostile manner to cause death and destruction.

While the OPCW is not an organization to combat terrorism per se nor is it seeking a new counter-terrorism mandate, we can offer a forum for relevant senior government officials and industry experts to gather and discuss various methods and approaches to promote and enhance chemical security and safety efforts, including threats from chemical terrorism. This concept was upheld during the Second Review Conference, when the Conference affirmed the continued relevance of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism. We thank Ms. Annie-Claire Mari of France for her dedicated efforts in chairing this group. I would encourage all of you to help make the Open-Ended Working Group a truly effective mechanism by working with the Technical Secretariat and each other in a determined manner to do all in our power to increase the level of chemical safety and security thereby reducing the very real threat of chemical terrorism in the twenty-first century.

Madame Chairperson,

As many of you know, this is my last Council meeting and I think it fitting and proper to offer a few remarks on the future of this exemplary Organization. As I have said before in this forum and others, the OPCW is truly a model of effective multilateral diplomacy that can continue to adapt to current and future threats.

I treasure the memories and the many accomplishments that together we have achieved -- amicably and by consensus -- during my time as United States Permanent Representative to the OPCW. We have worked together in a spirit of trust, respect for one another, and thoughtful tolerance for differing views.

My testament and fervent hope is that the productive collaboration that occurred during my almost six years at the OPCW will remain the hallmark of the Council, the Conference of the States Parties and the entire Organization, as they face the tough issues surrounding finally achieving chemical disarmament, preventing proliferation of chemical weapons and confronting the threat of chemical terrorism.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the 54th Session of the Council.

Thank you very much, Madame Chairperson.

Released on October 16, 2008

 [BACK TO TOP](#)