



## Statement to the Tenth Conference of the States Parties to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to express my delight that we will have your leadership at this Conference, and to pledge my support and that of my delegation for your efforts to ensure the success of this Conference of the States Parties. I extend a warm welcome to the representatives of those States Parties that have joined us over the past year, and to all my fellow delegates.

At first glance, our agenda may appear routine. Certainly, the headings for the various agenda items are all things we have seen before. And some of what we will do this week is indeed routine, though by no means unimportant. But this Conference will also address some issues that lie at the heart of the continued viability of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Let me touch briefly on some of the ways in which we will seek to move the Chemical Weapons Convention forward this week:

First, there is the program of work and budget for 2006: the Executive Council has recommended a 2006 budget that is below the level of the current budget, yet fully meets the Organization's requirements. It is a budget that makes realistic assessments about a challenging workload, including increases in both chemical weapons destruction monitoring and inspections of industrial facilities. It is a budget that offers further improvements in transparency. It is a budget that deserves our support.

We can also move forward on universal renunciation of chemical weapons: This has, once again, been a good year for the Chemical Weapons Convention. Our ranks have grown to 175 member states. But there are still countries that have not joined us in renouncing chemical weapons, including some that have chemical weapons programs. Progress in the Middle East remains notably slow, and should be a priority for all of us. Our efforts toward universality must continue unabated. This is a task that the Director-General and individual member states can pursue, regardless of any action or inaction at this Conference--but I hope that we will be able to adopt a substantive decision that will underline our commitment and provide further impetus to this effort.

However, Mr. Chairman, as my delegation has said before, to achieve the aim of a world free of chemical weapons, we must strive not just for a Convention that is universal, but for a Convention that is universally implemented. This Conference marks the expiration of the two-year Plan of Action on national implementation adopted by the Eighth Conference, which aimed to bring about universal, effective implementation of the obligations we have all accepted under Article VII of the Convention. This week we must act to adopt further measures to ensure effective national implementation of the Convention. My friend, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Peter Lichtenbaum, will address this body tomorrow to discuss this issue in more detail, but let me emphasize a few key points:

Implicit in the Action Plan that we adopted was the creation of a two-year grace period. We all agreed to help each other achieve effective national implementation, rather than taking a more forceful approach to what was--let me be blunt for a moment--widespread noncompliance with fundamental treaty obligations. We opened a window of opportunity, and we tried to help each other through it. The United States has played a leading role in this regard.

However, the Action Plan was not fully successful. Many States Parties have made progress, but not yet achieved full implementation. A handful have not yet taken the first steps. Our window closes this week, and too many are still on the wrong side of it. So what now? We cannot simply extend the action plan: that may work for those who have worked hard and made progress, but it clearly won't have an effect on States Parties who are not new to this Convention, and still have not even designated a National Authority. If you sleep through your wake-up alarm, ladies and gentlemen, you need a louder alarm clock, and I submit that this is exactly what some states need now. We need to wake up the member states that are still sleeping. Letting the Action Plan lapse without agreeing on follow-on measures, on the other hand, would not just end our coordinated efforts at assistance, but would have other consequences. States Parties, individually and collectively, would have to consider alternative courses for ensuring compliance.

We need a balanced approach that will move this Organization toward universal, effective implementation. Specifically, we need an agreement on follow-on measures that is time-limited; that includes measures to secure the attention of those States Parties that have thus far declined to take even the simplest steps; that provides an additional grace period, along with OPCW oversight, for those working conscientiously to fulfill their obligations; and that makes fair provision for States Parties that have joined the CWC since the adoption of the Action Plan.

Effective national implementation of the obligations of the Convention plays an indispensable role in our common security. It matters. And it matters, in part, because the CWC itself, and the action plan we adopted, are multilateral approaches to serious problems. If multilateralism is to thrive as a means of addressing such issues, it must demonstrate that it can be effective. And, it seems to me, that means demonstrating not only that we are prepared to help each other meet our obligations, but also that we are prepared to take appropriate steps when some of our members fail to even attempt to do so.

This is an important test of our collective political commitment to both the Convention and multilateralism. If we truly value the goals of the Convention, we cannot stand idly by and watch member states ignore their commitments. And most important of all, to ensure the security of our own populations, we cannot--we must not--allow the existence of holes in our collective security net.

Earlier today, the Director-General proposed another way of moving this Organization forward--by looking back. Establishing a day to commemorate the victims of CW attacks--not some victims, in some places, but ALL of the casualties of these horrific weapons--will remind the world of why we are here. And, perhaps more importantly, it will remind us of the larger issues at stake, when we are prone to becoming absorbed in minutia and details.

I ardently wish this Conference was in a position to move the Convention forward by adopting a long-overdue decision on how to select OCPF sites for inspections. I urge delegations to redouble their efforts to reach an agreement that achieves the critical security and confidence-building objectives of this inspection regime. The Convention provides for both the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to influence the selection process; it seems to us

important that the Conference adopt ground rules embodying these Treaty principles, rather than forcing States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to move forward without clear guidance or a transparent process.

Regarding other industry issues, I am pleased that we expect to adopt a decision on Schedule 1 captive use, but alarmed at the continued failure of member states to reach agreement on an array of long-running issues. Most of these are minor questions that, as a practical matter, have relatively little impact on the overall verification regime. Yet they continue to clog the industry cluster calendar and prohibit the intersessional group from focusing on other important or new issues. I will name a few:

- The Organization needs to be sure that States Parties are submitting declarations in a timely and complete fashion. There are still a number of States Parties that are not meeting their annual responsibilities. Although we have discussed this issue, little has been done to rectify the situation.
- It is critical that the inspectorate has all the tools and resources necessary to conduct effective and efficient verification. As new inspectors arrive at the OPCW, we need to ensure that they receive the same rigorous training that was provided at entry-into-force.

I urge States Parties to rededicate themselves to taking a broader view, and resolving their minor disagreements--or, if this is impossible, setting them aside--so that the industry cluster can focus on issues that have a wider effect on the nonproliferation activities of the Convention.

I also want to reiterate my government's support for the full and effective implementation of Article XI. States Parties have been working on a draft decision on Article XI implementation. I am hopeful that we will be able to reach agreement on a decision that is consistent with the obligations of States Parties under Article XI, that maintains the correct balance between the responsibilities of States Parties and the facilitating role that the Technical Secretariat can play once cooperative arrangements are in place, and will enable us to resolve this longstanding issue

Finally, distinguished colleagues, let me note one more way in which this Conference can help the CWC grow and move forward: we are called upon to select the next Director-General of the OPCW. I take consummate pleasure in the recommendation of the Executive Council that we renew the appointment of Rogelio Pflirter as Director-General. This decision will mark the high regard in which we hold the man, as well as recognition of his outstanding performance in an exceptionally challenging job.

Mr. Director-General, over the years you have had to make difficult decisions, particularly, I would note, with regard to implementation of the tenure policy. More recently, you have overseen the introduction of results-based budgeting. I am sure that when you indicated a willingness to serve another term, you did so knowing full well that only more difficult decisions, ranging from administration to policy, await you in the next four years. Let me assure you that the United States stands ready to work with you and assist you and the Organization in tackling these challenges.

No man is an island, and no success is earned by one man alone. On behalf of the United States, I want to recognize all the men and women of the Technical Secretariat for your hard work and many accomplishments. We value and appreciate your dedication and skill. You have our respect and our profound gratitude.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Representatives, it has been an honor to address you today. We can all look back on a year of solid accomplishments, particularly on national implementation. We must now address the challenges that face us in the coming year, particularly on Article VII, but also on many other issues. The United States delegation, and I personally, pledge to work with all of you during the course of this Conference, and over the next year, as we address the complex and important issues on our agenda and strive to reach the common goal of a world without chemical weapons.

Thank you.

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