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**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
AT ITS FIFTEENTH SESSION**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I welcome you all to the Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.
2. First of all, I wish to congratulate you, Ambassador Julio Roberto Palomo Silva of Guatemala, on your election as the Chairperson of the Conference. I am sure that with your extensive diplomatic experience and knowledge about the work of the OPCW, you will guide this session of the Conference to a successful conclusion. I also wish to thank our outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Vaidotas Verba of Lithuania, who has carried out his responsibilities with skill and distinction.
3. I want to seize this opportunity to warmly thank Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco Tonda of Mexico and Ambassador Jean-François Blarel of France, who have skilfully chaired the Executive Council during the period under review.
4. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr Ban Ki-moon, who has addressed an important message to the Conference, which will be read out by the Director of External Relations, Mr Zhixian Liu, after my statement.

Mr Chairperson,

5. Following the decision of the Conference last year to appoint me as the Director-General of the OPCW, in my statement to the Conference I pledged to fulfil the trust that States Parties had unanimously placed in me, and to do so with full dedication and to the best of my ability. Today, as I address the Conference of the States Parties for the first time since assuming charge as Director-General, I reiterate my commitment to the mission of the OPCW and to excellence in our endeavours.
6. To say that the Organisation is facing new challenges is to state the obvious. The challenges are in two areas. They relate firstly to the changes necessary within the Organisation in order to adapt to new conditions, especially with regard to the imminence of a reduced workload in terms of verification. Secondly, however, and



on a broader plane, the Organisation also needs to chart a clear course for itself in the face of new threats to security. I am confident that with its strong tradition of careful deliberation and consensus building, the OPCW will retain its relevance and importance as a key body contributing to international peace and security.

7. In the meantime, the Organisation continues to progress in all areas of its work. In presenting my report to you covering the period since the last session of the Conference, I will begin with chemical demilitarisation and verification activities.
8. My report is detailed and the full text will be circulated to the Conference. I will present to you the main highlights.

Chemical demilitarisation and verification

9. Nearly 63% of the total amount of Category 1 chemical weapons declared under the Chemical Weapons Convention have to date been destroyed. In aggregate terms, this represents 43,619 metric tonnes (MTs) of this category of weapons. This figure stood at 42% when reported to the last session of the Conference, thus indicating that steady progress has been made by the possessor States in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention.
10. With respect to Category 2 chemical weapons, 919.931 MTs, or 52.1%, of these weapons declared by possessor States have also been destroyed as at 31 October. Albania, India, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America have completed the destruction of all their Category 2 chemical weapons, whereas the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has destroyed 39.64% of the amount that it declared.
11. Furthermore, Category 3 chemical weapons have completely been destroyed by all States Parties that had declared them.
12. During the past year, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America, all of which have been granted extensions for completing the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapons, continued to fulfil their reporting obligations in a timely fashion and in accordance with paragraph 28 of Part IV(A) of the Verification Annex to the Convention. The Secretariat was able to reconcile the data that it had collected during on-site inspections with the information provided by the possessor States.
13. I commend the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which, overcoming a series of difficulties and delays, recently commenced, under OPCW verification, the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons. Destruction operations began at the Ruwagha Hydrolysis and Neutralisation System I using hydrolysis under caustic conditions as the method of destruction. As at 31 October, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had completed the destruction of approximately one MT of chemical agent, or four percent, of its Category 1 chemical weapons stockpile, thus meeting the phase 1 deadline established by the Conference at its Fourteenth Session. Category 1 destruction operations were temporarily halted at the beginning of November to allow for the installation of new destruction equipment, and are now planned to resume on 4 December.

14. In addition, in the second half of April 2010, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya commenced the destruction of two chemical weapons precursors (Category 2) at the Ruwagha Hydrolysis and Neutralisation System. However, new technical challenges prevented the continuation of these operations and, after a few trials and the destruction of 4.4 MTs of phosphorous trichloride, operations were terminated. As reported by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, destruction operations in relation to its Category 2 chemical weapons are now planned to restart in 2011.
15. In view of the additional delays that had arisen, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya submitted a new request for the revision of the phase 2 and 3 intermediate deadlines. Following this request, the Executive Council has recommended that the Conference at this session amend its decision and grant this State Party the requested extensions for the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons to 30 March 2011 and 25 April 2011, respectively. This recommendation is now before the Conference for its consideration (C-15/DEC/CRP.3, dated 12 November 2010).
16. The Russian Federation, for its part, also continued to show determined efforts in carrying out its chemical weapons destruction operations. By 31 October 2010, the Russian Federation had destroyed approximately 19,423 MTs, or 48.60%, of the total Category 1 chemical weapons declared. Two chemical weapons destruction facilities (CWDFs)—at Gorny and Kambarka—have completed operations, while three others—at Shchuchye, Leonidovka, and Maradykovsky—have been conducting destruction operations in the period since the last session of the Conference.
17. Following its phase-by-phase approach with respect to the construction and commissioning of CWDFs, the Russian Federation has increased its efforts to commence destruction operations at new facilities. The CWDF located at Pochep, Bryanskaya Oblast, began destruction operations on 26 November 2010.
18. Preparations are also proceeding to launch, next year, one new CWDF at Kizner as well as new destruction capacities at Shchuchye, Maradykovsky, and Leonidovka.
19. Pursuant to the decision taken by the Conference at its Eleventh Session and at the invitation of the Government of the Russian Federation, a delegation of the Executive Council visited the CWDF located at Pochep, from 6 to 9 September 2010. I also accompanied the delegation, which was headed by the Council's Chairperson. The visit offered an important opportunity to acquire a better understanding of the technology involved in the destruction of chemical weapons at the facility, as well as of the associated technical and financial challenges.
20. The United States of America is steadily continuing to complete the destruction of its chemical warfare agents. It has, as at the end of October, eliminated 22,526 MTs of Category 1 chemical weapons, equivalent to 81.12% of its declared stockpile. Four CWDFs have completed operations, namely Aberdeen, Johnston Atoll, Newport, and Pine Bluff Binary, while the incineration facility at Pine Bluff processed the last one-ton container on 12 November, and is currently conducting closure activities. The Secretariat will, in fact, this week cease its verification activities at Pine Bluff. Three other destruction facilities—at Anniston, Tooele, and Umatilla—are in the final stages of their mustard-agent campaigns. Current projections by the United States of America indicate that those facilities will complete operations by April 2012.

21. The United States of America has also indicated that the construction of two new CWDFs, at Pueblo and Blue Grass, is in progress, while the date for the commencement of destruction operations remains to be determined.
22. In the case of Iraq, the Secretariat has continued to provide assistance in clarifying remaining matters regarding its declarations, including the question of the destruction and conversion of its former chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs).
23. Meetings with Iraqi representatives have shown that, although substantial progress has been made, a number of matters that are a prerequisite for the identification of appropriate methods for the destruction of declared chemical weapons still need further consideration or clarification. Iraq, on its part, has once again reiterated its firm commitment to meeting its obligations under the Convention and to finalising its declarations so that initial inspections can take place.
24. As States Parties are aware, the United States of America and the Russian Federation have indicated that the completion of the destruction of their respective chemical weapons stockpiles might be prolonged beyond the 29 April 2012 deadline. Notwithstanding the complex technical and financial challenges posed by the destruction of their large stockpiles, both these countries have demonstrated over the years their firm resolve to abide by their solemn obligations under the Convention and to complete the destruction of their stockpiles at the earliest possible date.
25. The question of meeting the final destruction deadlines is currently being considered by the Executive Council. For this purpose, informal consultations are being carried out by its Chairperson, Ambassador Jean-François Blarel of France. While the issue is no doubt of considerable importance, a prudent way forward would be to seek a balanced and constructive solution that preserves the long-term effectiveness of the Convention as a unique instrument for banning chemical weapons from the world.

Abandoned chemical weapons

26. A highlight of this year has been the commencement of the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China. A ceremony dedicated to the start of these operations took place in Nanjing, China, on 1 September 2010. Following various tests, operations at Nanjing began on 12 October. Progress in destroying these abandoned chemical weapons underscores a core value of the Convention as an instrument that can enable States Parties to address difficult and long-standing issues in a constructive and cooperative spirit. I visited the facility in Nanjing earlier this month and witnessed the close cooperation between China and Japan. I encourage both countries to continue on this path.

Chemical weapons production facilities

27. Out of the 70 CWPFs declared by 13 States Parties, 43 have already been destroyed and 21 have been converted for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. As a result, chemical weapons production capacity has been completely eliminated for 91.4% of all declared CWPFs. Eleven States Parties have completed the destruction or conversion of all their declared CWPFs. All converted production facilities remain

under systematic verification by the OPCW to ensure that they are fully consistent with the approved conversion requests.

28. Iraq has declared possession of five CWPFs. For one of these facilities, Iraq has submitted a conversion request. One facility in the Russian Federation is yet to complete conversion, and two in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya have been certified as converted since the last session of the Conference.
29. One issue under consideration by the Council concerns the nature of continued verification measures for converted CWPFs upon completion of the 10-year period following the certification of conversion. Currently, seven converted facilities in three States Parties have passed this 10-year threshold. Pending a decision by the Council on this issue, the Technical Secretariat has temporarily suspended on-site inspections at these facilities. Next year, one additional facility will acquire this status, which will bring the number of converted CWPFs for which a decision on future verification is required to a total of eight. A decision by the Council on this question is therefore of key importance.

Non-proliferation and industry inspections

Mr Chairperson,

30. Allow me to move on to the implementation of the Convention's non-proliferation regime and to Article VI inspections. While I will touch upon some of the aspects of the Secretariat's work in this area during the period under review, further information will be available to delegations in the text of my statement, which will soon be circulated.
31. Since the beginning of this year, 193 inspections have been completed, amounting to 92.8% of the 208 Article VI inspections provided for in the Programme and Budget for 2010. Of these, eight inspections were conducted at Schedule 2 plant sites at which sampling and analysis were performed by the inspection teams. I expect that the Article VI inspection programme for the year will be completed as scheduled.
32. With regard to the issue of the selection mechanism for other chemical production facilities (OCPFs), which is of concern for both States Parties and the Secretariat alike, a new round of consultations has been initiated in the Industry Cluster by Ambassador Dr Fauziah Mohamad Taib of Malaysia and Ambassador Pieter de Savornin Lohman of the Netherlands.
33. Regarding the question of OCPF site selection, earlier this year, the Secretariat issued a report on the performance of the modified methodology for selecting OCPFs for inspections (EC-59/DG.5, dated 18 January 2010). The results of applying this modified methodology in 2008 and 2009 were consistent with what was projected when the Secretariat announced the modified selection methodology in 2007. In early 2011, the Secretariat intends to issue a similar report covering inspections conducted in 2010.
34. With respect to other outstanding issues relevant to Article VI, consultations have been initiated under the facilitation of Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa.

The Secretariat has been tasked with presenting papers on some of these issues and is now in the process of finalising the first three of them (“Declaration of Salts of Scheduled Chemicals”, “Risk Assessment of Schedule 2 Plant Sites”, and “Frequency of Inspections at Schedule 2 Plant Sites”).

35. In addition, another Industry-Cluster consultation, under the facilitation of Ambassador Nassima Baghli of Algeria, is addressing the captive use of scheduled chemicals. The Technical Secretariat has made available a note entitled “Legal Opinion Related to the Production of Schedule 1 Chemicals in a Captive-Use Situation” (S/881/2010, dated 1 November 2010). At the Industry-Cluster consultations, a non-paper was submitted by Denmark in response to questions about that State Party’s earlier paper, “Captive Use of Schedule 1 Chemicals under Article VI of the Convention” (EC-62/NAT.6, dated 17 September 2010).

Product subcategory codes for OCPFs

36. Forty of the 79 States Parties that have declared OCPFs have voluntarily made use of the product subcategory codes recommended in Note EC-53/DG.11, dated 17 June 2008. These 40 States Parties, representing an increase from 28 (out of 73) States Parties as reported in the 2009 Verification Implementation Report, have declared in total more than half of all OCPF plant sites. It will be recalled that these product codes have not yet been incorporated in the OCPF site-selection process.

Sequential inspections

37. Currently 50 States Parties accept sequential inspections. Of the States Parties that received five or more inspections in 2009, five do not allow sequential inspections. I encourage further acceptance of this type of inspection for Article VI facilities, and wish to stress that the Secretariat remains flexible in taking account of the specific requirements of the States Parties concerned. I would like to mention once again that the conduct of sequential inspections has no impact on the number of inspections that a State Party receives annually.

Timeliness and completeness of declarations

38. Timely and complete declarations are essential for the effective operation of the verification regime. Following a decision by the Council at its Fifty-First Session (EC-51/DEC.1, dated 27 November 2007), the Secretariat has continued to publish status reports on the timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Convention. This year, the number of timely submissions of annual declarations on past activities (ADPA) showed a slight decrease, from 57 to 54. In other words, this year, approximately 61% of these declarations have been received on time.
39. In the case of annual declarations of anticipated activities for 2011, the picture looks better. The number of States Parties submitting Schedule 1 declarations by the deadline of 2 October improved slightly, with 88% of declarations having been received on time. For Schedule 2 and 3 declarations, we expect about 85% to be received on time.

40. Since the last session of the Conference, the Secretariat has received initial declarations from three States Parties. This leaves eight States Parties that have yet to make any initial declarations, as well as two that have yet to submit an initial declaration under Article VI, and one under Article III. The Secretariat has also been following up the clarification of declarations relating to riot control agents with 21 States Parties.
41. It is evident that there is room for improvement in this area and I encourage States Parties to continue to make every effort to ensure that their relevant declarations are complete and timely. The Secretariat stands ready, of course, to assist States Parties should they so wish.

Electronic processing

42. Progress in the area of electronic processing of declarations is encouraging. The Secretariat has continued to develop the Verification Information System, VIS, and its associated software, the electronic declarations tool for National Authorities, EDNA.
43. In 2010, the development of the VIS has focused on the design and development of the Category 1 chemical weapons module, which is now approaching completion. At the same time, implementation and refinement of the Article VI modules has progressed.
44. Following the introduction of Version 2.1 of EDNA in June 2010, the second user-group forum was held in July 2010, with 26 representatives from 18 States Parties attending. A report on this forum was published on 1 November 2010 (S/882/2010).
45. Information sessions for EDNA will be held in the margins of the current session of the Conference, and details can be found in the Journals for this session of the Conference.

Confidentiality and security

46. Since the Fourteenth Session of the Conference, the Technical Secretariat has implemented new tools and methodologies in the areas of corporate management and security-risk management. The Secretariat hosted the Security Audit and Assessment Team (SAAT) and co-developed a comprehensive risk-based action plan for the Organisation in response to the report of the SAAT.

International cooperation and assistance

47. The Secretariat has continued to carry out a large and varied number of activities in the area of international cooperation and assistance. Once again, I will mention here only some of them and further details will be included in the text of the statement that will be circulated to delegations.

Assistance and protection

Mr Chairperson,

48. In the area of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, the highlight of the year was our latest major field exercise on the delivery of assistance (ASSISTEX 3), which was conducted in Tunisia from 11 to 15 October 2010. Teams from 11 States Parties (Denmark, France, India, Italy, Libya, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA) took part in the exercise together with the Technical Secretariat team. Subregional teams from East, North, and West Africa and the Caribbean also participated in the exercise, which altogether involved over 500 people. The main objective was to test the procedures, capabilities, and readiness of the Technical Secretariat and the Member States for an emergency response to a request for assistance, as well as coordination and cooperation with relevant organisations and agencies.
49. I express my deep gratitude to the Government of Tunisia for hosting ASSISTEX 3.
50. Furthermore, the Secretariat conducted several national, subregional, and regional capacity-building courses, seminars, workshops, and exercises for specialists in a number of States Parties, dealing with the response to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
51. In addition, the Secretariat organised assistance-and-protection training courses related to offers made under Article X of the Convention jointly with the governments of China, the Czech Republic, Finland, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, and Switzerland with financial support from China, the Czech Republic, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the European Union.
52. During the reporting period, the Secretariat also carried out visits to Germany, Peru, and Ukraine in order to assess offers of assistance from States Parties under paragraph 7 of Article X of the Convention. At the request of the National Authorities of Mexico and Seychelles, the Secretariat dispatched a team for an initial technical-assessment visit. The main purpose of the visit was to discuss the specific needs and requirements of these States Parties in the area of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, and to launch a project for national capacity-building in this area.
53. Cooperation with other relevant international organisations continued throughout the year. The aim of such exchanges was to explore possibilities for cooperation in the provision of assistance to the States Parties concerned in cases of use or threat of use of chemical weapons, as provided for in Article X of the Convention.

International cooperation

54. In the area of international cooperation, the Associate Programme has completed its eleventh edition. A total of 27 participants from 27 Member States, including 14 African States Parties, successfully completed the Programme. This year the Programme benefited from a generous voluntary financial contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as from an in-kind contribution provided by the Government of Japan. Other States Parties, including Belgium, Denmark, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, and Spain, have also extended their support by identifying placements in their industry sectors for the training of participants. I also wish to express my appreciation for the key support that the Secretariat has received from the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
55. Other capacity-building programmes, including those that focus on enhanced participation from Africa, continue to be conducted with successful and satisfactory outcomes.
56. To enhance the capacity of national laboratories, a number of technical assistance visits have been carried out.
57. In terms of collaboration with other institutions, the Secretariat continues to benefit from the support provided by Protechnik Laboratories of South Africa; the Spiez Laboratory, Switzerland; the Technical University of Delft, the Netherlands; and VERIFIN of Finland.
58. The International Foundation for Science in Sweden has also continued to provide invaluable assistance for research projects to scientists and researchers from developing countries and economies in transition.
59. Under the Conference-Support Programme, the Secretariat has supported 23 scientific events, enabling as many as 101 scientists and researchers to participate in these scientific forums. Eight of these events were held in Africa and 21 sponsorships were offered to African nationals.
60. Under the auspices of the Equipment-Exchange Programme, the OPCW donated and transferred three used gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) instruments to institutions in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa. A special training course was held in July at one such recipient institution, namely Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa.
61. Chemical-safety management is also emerging as an important area of assistance, especially for small- and medium-sized enterprises in the chemical industry. A seminar on the subject was organised at the OPCW Headquarters at the beginning of July, with financial support from the European Union.
62. Another new initiative undertaken within international-cooperation programmes is analytical-skills-development training courses at the national level. After a successful pilot activity in 2009, this year two such courses were implemented, in Kuala Lumpur and Lima.

63. On 24 and 25 November, the Technical Secretariat hosted a workshop on Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The workshop was attended by 130 representatives from Member States. This event was indeed timely and will contribute to further refining the Secretariat's programmes in this area.

Implementation support

64. Effective national implementation of the Convention by all States Parties remains a priority.
65. Article VII obligations are at the core of the Organisation's national implementation efforts. States Parties and National Authorities are increasingly recognising the need to focus on all the different facets of the implementation of the Convention. Better identification of their essential needs is contributing to growing maturity in the work undertaken by National Authorities for more effective implementation of the Convention.
66. During the year, 13 bilateral technical assistance visits took place to States Parties in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Additionally, four annual regional meetings of National Authorities were held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bolivia, Namibia, and Kuwait. Also this year, two basic training courses and one advanced training course for National Authority personnel, as well as seven regional and subregional customs training courses, have been carried out. The Secretariat has also provided courses for National Authorities in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe on the use of EDNA. During 2010, the Secretariat has again reached out to parliamentarians, particularly in Africa, and other relevant stakeholder groups, in order to create awareness about the Convention's requirements.
67. Furthermore, this year's annual meeting of National Authorities was successfully held last weekend here in The Hague.

Africa Programme

68. During 2010, the Technical Secretariat has continued to engage with African States Parties with regard to their needs and in order to deliver programmes and courses designed to assist them in effectively implementing the Convention. The OPCW has continued to build on its strategy to promote stronger interaction with African countries, especially through their national and regional institutions. The Secretariat has engaged with subregional and regional parliamentary institutions to raise awareness among the stakeholder group responsible for the enactment of relevant legislation. We remain hopeful that these efforts will lead to positive action in African parliaments, many of which have draft implementing legislation before them. The Secretariat has also continued to engage the African Union in an effort to identify synergies that will support implementation of the Convention in the region.
69. As the Africa Programme has shown promising results, I have approved its extension for a further period of three years.
70. The availability of voluntary contributions from Member States and from the European Union has played a significant role in supporting the efforts of the

Technical Secretariat in delivering programmes and courses in the area of international cooperation and assistance, including as regards the Africa Programme. I would also like to recognise the in-kind contribution of those States that have hosted and assisted the Technical Secretariat in implementing the activities held in 2010. While the core programmes are supported from the regular Budget of the Organisation, the role of voluntary and in-kind contributions is an essential adjunct to the efforts of the Secretariat; I look forward to an increased number of donors in the future.

Implementation of Article VII

Mr Chairperson,

71. In the context of national implementation of Article VII of the Convention, significant progress continues to be made. The main developments in States Parties in this area, and the results achieved, are detailed in my concurrent reports on the status of the implementation of Article VII, which the Conference has before it as C-15/DG.9, C-15/DG.10, and C-15/DG.11, all dated 27 October 2010.
72. As at today's date, 185 States Parties (98%) have designated or established a National Authority. There remain only three States Parties that have not yet met their fundamental obligations in this respect.
73. Additionally, with regard to the adoption of the necessary legislative and administrative measures to fully and effectively implement the Convention, 87 of our Member States (46%) have adopted legislation covering all key areas.
74. The statistics also show that 101 States Parties have yet to complete the task of implementing the Convention at the national level and therefore have to continue their efforts in this area. I invite the Conference to encourage States Parties that have not yet done so to enact the required legislative and administrative measures, to keep the Secretariat informed about the progress they have made, and to communicate any difficulties they have encountered. The Secretariat stands ready to continue providing tailor-made legal assistance to States Parties, upon request.

Universality and external relations

Mr Chairperson,

75. The Conference has before it a report on the implementation of the action plan on universality for the period from 14 September 2009 to 15 September 2010 (EC-62/DG.11 C-15/DG.8, dated 23 September 2010). The report details the activities carried out by the Secretariat in the past year and contains some proposals for further action.
76. During the period under review, the Secretariat has continued its contacts with the remaining States not Party, with the notable exception of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Notwithstanding the Secretariat's repeated attempts to open a dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, this State continues to avoid any contact with the Organisation. We look forward to the support of the States

- Parties in promoting progress with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as with the other States not Party, including through bilateral channels.
77. Upon my assumption of the office of Director-General, I addressed letters to the Foreign Ministers of all States not Party. I have drawn their attention to the importance that the Conference attaches to the universality of the Convention and have offered to extend our dialogue towards that end.
 78. I am pleased to report that Egypt has recently informed the Secretariat that the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is ready to receive a visit by the OPCW. States Parties will recall that a similar visit took place to Israel in June 2009. I look forward to the other States not Party following suit, particularly so in the case of Angola and Myanmar.
 79. Exchanges with officials of Myanmar have indicated that ratification of the Convention could be considered positively following the national elections in the country. The Secretariat will follow up relevant developments and continue to offer assistance wherever needed.
 80. On the occasion of my visit to the United Nations in connection with a meeting of the First Committee of the 65th Session of the General Assembly last October, I met with the Permanent Representatives of Egypt, Israel, Myanmar, Somalia, and the Syrian Arab Republic. These meetings were organised by the Secretariat, jointly with the Permanent Representation of Poland. During my visit to New York, I also met with Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and with his High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr Sergio Duarte, as well as with H.E. Mr Claude Heller, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Chairman of the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).
 81. Earlier, I attended the High-Level Meeting on "Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations", convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. This ministerial-level meeting was also attended by heads of Organisations dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation issues. The purpose of the meeting was to provide greater political impetus for reviving the work of the Conference on Disarmament and other relevant initiatives in the area of disarmament, peace and security.
 82. The fact that our work now finds wider recognition in the international community is also evident from the Final Document of the successful 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which concluded in New York last summer. In its conclusions and recommendations covering the implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East, adopted in 1995, the 2010 Review Conference endorsed a number of steps to be taken. The Conference requested the OPCW and other relevant international organisations to prepare background documentation for a Conference—expected to be convened in 2012—"regarding modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained".

83. Since taking office, I have, furthermore, had the opportunity to visit a number of Member States, including in connection with events organised by the Technical Secretariat. These visits have enabled me to meet with representatives of the Member States concerned and to discuss issues related to the implementation of the Convention.

International Year of Chemistry

84. The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2011 as the International Year of Chemistry. The Organisation will make an appropriate contribution to the activities organised during the year. It will also host an international conference entitled “Conference on International Cooperation and Chemical Safety & Security.” This activity, planned to take place in September 2011, will be designed to ensure that, among the objectives identified for the celebration, the OPCW’s work under the Chemical Weapons Convention to guide progress in chemistry towards exclusively peaceful ends finds adequate coverage, publicity, and international support. The conference will be funded purely from voluntary contributions. Given the importance of the International Year of Chemistry, it is my hope that States Parties will come forward with the necessary voluntary contributions to make this event possible and successful.

The OPCW’s contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

85. On the subject of the OPCW’s contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts, a Note by the Director-General on that subject (EC-59/DG.11) was issued on 8 February 2010.
86. The Note includes information on relevant decisions by the OPCW’s policy-making organs and activities of the Council’s Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism. It also includes the activities undertaken by the Secretariat, as well as those in collaboration with States Parties and with relevant international organisations. As requested by delegations, I will issue a similar note on a yearly basis.
87. The Technical Secretariat has continued to support the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism.
88. During the reporting period, two meetings were conducted under the auspices of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism together with the facilitations for Articles X and VII. These meetings served to improve the coordination of the OPCW’s contribution in the context of counter-terrorism efforts.
89. In cooperation with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the Secretariat developed the concept of a workshop on international response and mitigation of terrorist use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons or materials. The workshop, which will be held in early 2011 and will be attended by relevant international organisations and stakeholders, aims at defining major threats facing the international community from the potential terrorist use of chemical and biological weapons and materials, and the ways and means of mitigating such threats.

Safety and security at chemical plants

90. Safety and security at chemical plants remains an area of growing interaction between Member States and the Technical Secretariat.
91. One concrete activity in this sphere was a successful table-top exercise, organised by the Government of Poland and the Secretariat, which took place on 22 and 23 November 2010 in Warsaw, Poland. Such events are designed to create a better understanding of the need for preparedness to prevent terrorist attacks involving chemicals and of the growing risks associated with terrorism. I would like to thank the European Union for its financial support for this exercise, provided under European Union Council Decision 2009 on support for OPCW activities.

Administrative and financial matters

92. I am pleased to note the unqualified audit opinion that the External Auditor has placed on the OPCW's Financial Statements for the period that ended on 31 December 2009. In his report, the External Auditor also made some recommendations to further improve the performance in different areas within the Technical Secretariat. I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the External Auditor of Germany for the support and advice that he and his team have provided to the OPCW during 2009 and 2010.
93. The Conference has before it the Secretariat's income-and-expenditure report for the period ending June 2010 (EC-62/DG.2 C-15/DG.5, dated 21 July 2010). I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the outstanding 2010 assessed contributions as per 11 November 2010 reflect a receipt level of 96.6%, compared to 84.5% on the same date last year. Nevertheless, our ability to meet the core objectives in 2010 still depends on our receiving from States Parties their assessed national contributions in full and on time. I therefore urge all States Parties that have not yet done so to do their utmost to comply with their financial obligations under the Convention. I further encourage States Parties that are in arrears to regularise the payment of their outstanding annual contributions, including through multi-year payment plans, which are available to them.
94. The OPCW is committed to implementing the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) from 1 January 2011. As requested by the Conference at its Fourteenth Session, the proposed amendments to the Financial Rules of the OPCW were approved by the Council at its Sixty-First Session (EC-61/DEC.7, dated 1 July 2010) and the draft decision on the approval of the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations (C-15/DEC/CRP.2, dated 9 November 2010) has been submitted to the Conference. Subsequent to the Conference's approval of the aforementioned proposal, the OPCW's Financial Statements for the reporting period beginning 1 January 2011 will be officially IPSAS compliant. A Note by the Secretariat on the IPSAS implementation progress has been submitted to the Conference for its information.

Draft Programme and Budget for 2011

Mr Chairperson,

95. Since the Draft Programme and Budget for 2011 was presented to Member States at the end of June this year, extensive consultations have taken place. Nonetheless, at its last session, the Council was not in a position to reach consensus and it will have to resume during the current session of the Conference in order to address this important matter.
96. It is my sincere hope that the Council will make every effort to ensure that the decision on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2011 is submitted to this session of the Conference for its consideration and approval.

Personnel matters

97. During 2010, the Executive Council adopted a decision concerning the amendments to Interim Staff Rule 5.1.01(c) on the carrying forward of accumulated annual leave days beyond 1 January of any year, and Interim Staff Rule 9.4.02 on the commutation of accrued annual leave (EC-62/DEC.5, dated 6 October 2010). Both amendments will be effective as of 1 January 2011. The Council also adopted a decision regarding the provision of information on the composition of the Technical Secretariat (EC-62/DEC.4, dated 6 October 2010). Pursuant to that decision, the Secretariat will present the first annual report on this issue to the Executive Council in 2011.

Scientific Advisory Board

98. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) held one session in April 2010, during which it discussed the question of applications of nanomaterials and nanotechnology in drug delivery. In the assessment of the SAB, given the current state of development in these areas, delivery of agents with nanocarriers by intravenous or oral route would have only a limited application for offensive chemical weapons purposes. However, the SAB considered that there may be applications of nanocarriers for improved drug delivery of medical countermeasures to chemical-warfare agents. Considering the fast pace of development in nanotechnology, the SAB was of the opinion that it should keep under scrutiny the development of nanocarriers.
99. The SAB further addressed the question of riot control agents and incapacitating chemical agents.
100. The temporary working group on sampling and analysis held its fifth meeting in November. During this meeting, the experts of the temporary working group continued to address questions of analysis of toxins, sample preparation for aqueous solutions of degradation products, trace analysis in investigations of alleged use, and applications of molecularly imprinted polymers. The report of the temporary working group will be considered by the SAB during its Sixteenth Session.

Mr Chairperson,

101. As we look towards the future of the Organisation in the years after 2012, I believe that it is useful to examine a wide range of perspectives. In this light, and in order to reflect on the next phase in the evolution of our Organisation, I have decided to establish an independent advisory panel to review the implementation of the Convention and to make recommendations for future OPCW activities. This panel will be wholly independent and its members will serve in their personal capacities. I am pleased to report that Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden has accepted my invitation to chair the panel, and that we have managed to put together a group of experts from relevant fields, such as diplomacy, industry, and science and technology, which is also geographically representative. The panel will convene for its first meeting here in The Hague on 14 and 15 December this year, and will hold a small number of subsequent meetings before submitting its final report to me in June 2011. The Technical Secretariat will support its work. I will of course share the final report of the panel with States Parties in order to assist them in their consideration of issues affecting the evolution of the Organisation.

102. This concludes my report. Thank you for your attention.

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