

***Statement by H.E. Dr Ali Khoshrou***  
***Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International  
Affairs***  
***Before***  
***The 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the CWC State  
Parties***  
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*In the name of Almighty, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

*Mr. Chairman,*

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the State Parties. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

May I also thank your predecessor, Ambassador Dato Noor Farida Ariffin of Malaysia, for her able and exemplary leadership during her tenure. Our felicitation also goes to other members of the bureau for their election.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Director General of OPCW and his staff for their unsparing efforts in promoting efficiency of the organization.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China. However, let me elaborate further on some of the key points in the agenda of the Conference.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always taken a great interest in international peace and security, through opposing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and calling for their total and irreversible elimination. In this respect, we welcome promotion of full and effective implementation of the CWC, as the first truly non-discriminatory multilateral disarmament treaty, and its related universal verification. Iran, from the beginning, has been one of the active proponents of the conclusion of the CWC and its full and nondiscriminatory implementation. It has, therefore, made significant contributions to the negotiations and

conclusion of the Convention. Since the entry into force of the Convention, we have been supporting the organization in its endeavors to achieve the objectives of the Convention and earnestly fulfilled our obligations.

This commitment to the objectives of the Convention originates from our horrifying experience during the 8 years of Saddam's invasion of Iran whose bitter memories are still vivid in Iranians minds. More than one hundred thousand military and civilian people fell victim to the use of various types of chemical weapons.

Over 60,000 are still receiving some kind of medical treatment. Out of this number, the health condition of around 40,000, who have been exposed to high doses of mustard gas, is critical. At least, ten percent of the victims whose health conditions are critical will have a gradual and very painful death.

The situation of those who have been exposed to lower doses of mustard gas or nerve agent is gradually getting worse. Over 7,000 of these victims are civilians. They all suffer from daily unbearable effects of chemical weapons, including difficulties in breathing and development of chronic health problems. These include increased susceptibility to respiratory cancers, miscarriage and congenital malformation, ocular injury; skin lesions, as well as mental disorders.

To our regret, the perpetrators and the suppliers of these deadly weapons to Saddam are yet to be punished. I declare here that Saddam must be brought to justice for his crimes against humanity and use of chemical weapons in a large scale against Iranians and Iraqi people. Should we fail to do so we would send a wrong message that war criminals might escape justice. One could not justify any negligence in serving justice. On our part, we stand ready to cooperate with the international community by providing all relevant evidences for Saddam's trail.

The Director General, Ambassador Pfirter, during his visit to Iran met some of these victims and got a first hand experience of their sufferings. Here, I should express my appreciation for his visit to Tehran and his meeting with the victims of chemical weapons.

Iran's grim experience offers valuable lessons, especially at the time when there is increasing concern over chemical terrorism. We enjoy the

world's leading centers for treatment of long-term effects of chemical weapons. We have shared our experience with the international community, in collaboration with the OPCW, through holding seven annual international training courses. Scientists and doctors from all over the globe have participated in such courses and studied the effects of chemical weapons on human beings and various available treatments.

High on our agenda at this Conference is the implementation of the plan of action on article VII namely, “National Implementation Measures”. This provides us with an opportunity to take stock of the progress made in implementation of the plan of action.

On our part, we have taken all necessary measures, in accordance with our constitutional process, to implement Article VII’s obligations. Iran has set up its own National Authority, as early as the entry into force of the Convention. It has submitted its initial and annual declarations. We have also provided for all necessary facilities for the conduct of inspections by the OPCW.

Although Iran is considered monist in terms of the legal system, the complementary national implementation legislation act has been adopted by the cabinet and forwarded to the parliament for its final approval. This implementation legislation covers all key areas of the Convention, in particular verification of any prohibited activity.

Effective national control over transfer of schedule chemicals is an important aspect in Iran's implementation of its obligations under the convention. It has adopted rigorous measures, both for the domestic and export control.

We have strengthened our customs system to effectively control, track and report on transfer of CWC scheduled chemicals. Iranian customs organization has developed a very effective and fully automated system of exports and imports registration, licensing, certification, risk analysis procedures, mobile X ray and physical inspections, laboratory analysis and data collection, as well as a unique 11 digit commodity codes for scheduled chemicals

In addition, Iranian customs organization is an active member of our National Authority, whose authorization and approval for any import and export of schedule chemicals is required.

To provide for experience sharing, we have offered to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian regional seminar of national authorities on the implementation of the Convention.

While welcoming the efforts of the Technical Secretariat, as well as States Parties in fostering implementation of Article VII, it should be noted that national implementation is a time-consuming process, requiring accumulated experience. Therefore, in our view, the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference must not be considered as an end to this process.

One particular aspect of National Implementation Action Plan is paragraph 2(e) of Article XI, requesting all Parties to review their existing national regulations in the field of trade in chemicals in order to render them consistent with the object and purpose of the Convention. The existing national regulations, in particular those of developed States Parties, are yet to become consistent with the object and purpose of the Convention. They need to abide by their earlier political commitment and the letter and spirit of the Convention to review the interim arrangement of Australia Group for the benefit of CWC States Parties so as to preserve the integrity, credibility and authority of the Convention.

It remains unfortunate that no progress is made in implementation of Article XI. Continued narrow interpretation of Article I (d) in a way to render the Article XI ineffective would do away with positive incentives for accession to the Convention. We believe that there should exist a distinction between those states that have decided to join the Convention and those that have decided to stay out. Therefore, a balanced solution ought to be concluded in order to facilitate unhindered transfers between States Parties.

Furthermore, confining Article XI to ICA programs is a blatant ignorance of the rights of the States Parties under this Article.

As regards Article X, we welcome the adoption of the long awaited procedure for annual submission of information on national programs for protective purposes, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Article. It enhances the ability of the organization to evaluate the national capacities of States Parties in this connection. However, it is obvious that other provisions of Article X require similar attention. As a victim of massive use of chemical weapons, we feel that OPCW is far from being a well

prepared organization to cope with cases of threat of use or use of chemical weapons against a State Party. Establishing capacity for coordination and delivery of assistance and protection against chemical weapons to States Parties requires much more undertakings, in particular in defining relevant strategies and planning. So, in our view, facilitation of this issue should be intensified.

In conclusion, the Convention was meant to provide for elimination of chemical weapons. It is ironic to note that some possessor States Parties seem not to be serious enough in considering their obligation to meet the deadlines for elimination of their chemical weapons arsenals. Complete destruction of all chemical weapons as a fundamental obligation of State Parties has a vital role in non-proliferation of such weapons and the fight against chemical terrorism.

Thank you Mr. Chairman