

**Statement by Ambassador Maria Del Carman Gonzalez Cabal
Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the OPCW**

**Eleventh Conference of the States Parties
The Hague, 5 December 2006**

Mr Chairman,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to join with the other delegations which spoke before me to congratulate you, Mr Chairman, on your election. The delegation of Ecuador is certain that, under your leadership, the deliberations of this Conference will come to a successful conclusion. Also, we extend our congratulations to the 10 new States which as Vice-Chairs make up the bureau of the Chairmanship of the Conference.

I should also like to stress our recognition of the work done by the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Antonio Arrospide del Busto, Permanent Representative of Peru, whose multilateral experience and special gifts as a negotiator were evident to all during his chairmanship of the Tenth Conference.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, for the clear and analytical report which he submitted as well as the constant and intelligent work which he is doing at the head of our Organisation.

Mr Chairman,

Since the Tenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties in November 2005, six countries have formally adhered to our Organisation. Therefore, we congratulate Djibouti, Haiti, Liberia, Comoros, the Central African Republic and Montenegro. These adhesions continue the process of consolidating the universality of the CWC. We know the enormous work that our Director-General is doing in the area of universality. Indeed it is critical that all countries accept the jurisdiction of the OPCW, particularly the States which possess chemical weapons.

Mr Chairman,

Ecuador has always been a peace-loving country. We consider ourselves, therefore, deeply committed to the work being done by the OPCW. That is why Ecuador supports the work of a strong, universal organisation to avoid the danger presented by chemical weapons. As a result, in the course of this year, our country has collaborated with the OPCW in each and every one of the inspections which were carried out in our national industry. I should also like to say that, as of this Session of the Conference, Ecuador will for the first time be part of the Confidentiality Commission of the OPCW. This will allow Ecuador to be more closely connected to the work being done by the OPCW from one of its governing bodies.

Mr Chairman,

Turning to the OPCW budget for the year 2007, the delegation of Ecuador agrees with the intelligent administration of resources and therefore with the zero growth in the budget for the second consecutive year. In this connection, we should also point out that Ecuador has regularly and constantly fulfilled its financial obligations vis-à-vis the OPCW.

We are also pleased that the resources are being used equitably in international cooperation, particularly in the training of National Authority personnel to be able completely to fulfil the obligations stemming from the CWC.

Mr Chairman,

Since the last Conference of the States Parties to the CWC, the National Authority on chemical weapons of Ecuador, with support from the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, has been working on its operational plan, reinforcing its own institutions, as well as developing national legislation to regulate this field, using the CWC as a framework.

I should like to express gratitude for the constant support given by the Director-General, the International Cooperation Branch of the Technical Secretariat, and by the Legal Adviser's Office in the training of the staff of the National Authority in matters related to the implementation of the CWC.

As regards the OPCW tenure policy, the delegation of Ecuador shares the ideas of the Director-General, that is to say that the inspectors' contracts could be extended until 2012 given the investment the OPCW has made in training its staff. Therefore, it is fair to increase the period of extension of contracts, with a view to facilitating the achievement of the milestones set by the CWC.

Mr Chairman,

A crucial theme relating to the CWC itself is meeting the deadlines for the destruction before 2012 of declared chemical weapons. The delegation of Ecuador is concerned to observe that new plans going are round for destruction of declared chemical weapons with deadlines which go beyond those set by the CWC.

We know the efforts which have been made to carry out the work of destroying chemical weapons, and we recognise the good will of the parties involved, particularly if we consider that the OPCW is the international agency in which the principal possessors of chemical weapons accept the jurisdiction of the CWC and work hard to implement it. However, we cannot fail to draw attention to the fact that setting new deadlines places doubt on the credibility of the very foundations of the OPCW.

In conclusion, I should like to wish the best of good luck to the delegations here present so that the result of our deliberations at the Conference can be as fruitful and beneficial as possible.

Thank you very much.