

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
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MESSAGE TO 14TH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
The Hague, 30 November 2009

I am pleased to send my greetings to the Fourteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As the only instrument that bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under strict international verification, the Convention is a major accomplishment.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons continues to make significant progress towards achieving the Convention's goals.

This year, it achieved a landmark by verifying the destruction of more than 50 per cent of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles. The destruction of those stockpiles by possessor States has continued. Three such States have completely eliminated their chemical weapons. The others are required to fulfil their destruction obligations by April 2012. This will be a major challenge.

The OPCW has conducted more than 3,800 inspections, including at commercial enterprises. The global chemical industry deserves credit for supporting the Convention's non-proliferation goals. I am also encouraged that almost all States Parties have established or designated their National Authority, a crucial step in ensuring implementation.

With 188 States Parties, the Convention has made significant progress towards universality. However, seven States have not yet joined. Their accession could build confidence in their respective regions and contribute to peace and security. As Depositary, I call upon States that remain non-parties to ratify or accede to the Convention without delay.

I am hopeful that further progress will be made in each area covered by the Convention: chemical disarmament, non-proliferation, assistance and protection, and international cooperation. I commend the OPCW for the constructive spirit of cooperation and consensus that marks its work, and offer all States Parties and other participants my best wishes for a successful conference.