

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON REMEMBRANCE DAY
FOR ALL VICTIMS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE
29 April 2011**

This annual remembrance day, marking the anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997, is an opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of chemical warfare and to reaffirm the international community's condemnation of an inhumane weapon of mass destruction.

The Chemical Weapons Convention embodies the collective determination of States and people to eliminate this threat completely and permanently, and to promote a world where chemistry is exclusively used for the benefit of humanity. In that spirit, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 the International Year of Chemistry in order to celebrate chemistry as a science of peace and progress.

Important advances have been made in implementing the Convention's provisions and fulfilling the mandate entrusted to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The Convention now has 188 States Parties. More than 65 per cent of declared chemical warfare agents have been verifiably destroyed. Three States have destroyed their stockpiles, and the remaining possessors are working intently toward that goal. An impressive 90 per cent of chemical weapons production capability has been inactivated or permanently converted for peaceful purposes.

The non-proliferation regime provided for under the Convention is also working effectively. More than 2000 inspections have been conducted at industrial facilities, and a monitoring mechanism is in place to track global exports and imports of toxic chemicals. Almost all States Parties have also established a National Authority, a key actor in ensuring full and effective domestic implementation.

On this Remembrance Day, let us pledge to build on this progress by doing our utmost to eliminate chemical weapons stockpiles and promote the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and its implementation worldwide.