

**Statement by Ambassador Htin Lynn,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
at the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties  
to the Chemical Weapons Convention  
(The Hague, 28 November -2 December 2016)**

**Mr. Chairperson,  
Mr. Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, my delegation would like to extend our sincere congratulations to you, on your election as the Chair of the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are fully confident that, under your able guidance, this Conference will achieve our desired outcomes.
2. Our appreciation also goes to your predecessor Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola Nicolín of Mexico, for his outstanding work during the previous session.
3. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Director-General Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü and members of the Technical Secretariat for their continued dedication and commitment to the work of the Organization.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

4. My delegation associate itself with the statement of NAM CWC member States and China delivered by the Ambassador of Bolivian Republic of Venezuela.
5. Disarmament is the one of the priorities of the member states of the United Nations. We have determined in the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind. With this determination, we have negotiated disarmament instruments, brought them into force, and are implementing them in a most effective way to meet with their objective and purpose.
6. The Chemical Weapons Convention is a unique disarmament instrument for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. The Convention entered into force with 87 States Parties on 29 April 1997. After 19 years, we now have an impressive membership of 192 States Parties representing about 98% of the global population and the worldwide chemical industry. This makes the Treaty near-universal.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

7. Universal accession to the convention is crucial to its success. A single non-adherence can pose serious threat to the integrity and effectiveness of the treaty. We should redouble our efforts on effective promotion of universality with tailor-made strategies to bring the remaining states into the convention.

8. In this context, My delegation calls upon all States not yet party to ratify or accede to the Treaty without delay.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

9. We appreciate the work by the OPCW which led to the destruction of 94% the total chemical warfare agents declared by the member states. Progress made with the Secure Information Exchange (SIX) system has brought more sense of security and confidence to the member states in the work of the Organisation.

10. While universality is essential, the effectiveness of the treaty also relies on the effectiveness of its verification regime. Challenges such as preventing access by non-state actors to chemical weapons and closing gaps and discrepancies, unintentional or deliberate, in member states declarations need to be addressed intelligently and diligently.

11. Myanmar condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at anytime, by anyone, be it a member state or a non-state actor, under any circumstances. It is immoral, inhumane and contrary to international law. Any perpetrators who are responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.

12. In this connection, we commend the work of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) and the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria (FFM), respectively.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

13. Let me turn to our national efforts in implementing the CWC. Last year, Myanmar became the 191<sup>st</sup> State Party to the Convention. Myanmar signed the Convention on 14 January 1993, the day after its opening for signature. However, due to our domestic priorities and capacity constraints, we were able to ratify the CWC after two decades of interval. The Convention entered into force for Myanmar on 7 August 2015.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

14. For the effective implementation of the Convention, the National Authority of Myanmar for the CWC was formed in August 2015.

15. The Representative Team for Inspection was also formed on December 2015 to accompany with the inspectors and inspection assistants from OPCW. Myanmar's acceptance of OPCW inspectors and inspection assistants was informed to the Technical Secretariat on March 2016.

16. I thank the Implementation Support Branch for the comments and recommendations in the process of updating present domestic law on the Prevention of Hazards from Chemical and Related Substances. The current Chemical Law was enacted in August 2013, before Myanmar's ratification to the CWC and as such it has to bring into line with the Treaty. We are carefully reviewing the comments and recommendations with the relevant ministries and authorities. We will request more assistance from the Technical Secretariat to formulate the law in line with the Convention.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

19. In closing, I would like to share a couple of thoughts with you.

20. As we approach the Twentieth Anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention, we can congratulate ourselves for what we have achieved thus far in upholding the global chemical weapons ban and ensuring its effective implementation. However, we cannot remain complacent, and recent developments have reminded us that our mission is still far from completion. We must remain vigilant, prudent, effective and firm in implementing the treaty in the years to come.

21. At the same time, we must not lose sight of vigorously implementing Article XI provisions that are crucial for the economic and technological development of States Parties particularly of the developing countries, in a full, effective and non-discriminatory manner. In this connection, Myanmar welcomes and supports the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities co-chaired by Canada and South Africa.

22. I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Conference and be published on the OPCW website and extranet.

With this note, I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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