

27-28 October 2011

Tarnow, Poland

Statement by

H.E Prof. Ruthie C. Rono

Ambassador of Kenya to the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Permanent Representative of Kenya to the OPCW

Distinguished Participants,

Dear Friends,

I would like to extend my thanks for inviting me to attend and to address this important seminar on development of the international centre for chemical safety and security in Tarnow.

I wish to thank and congratulate Mr Ryszard Scigala, President of Tarnow and Mr Jerzy Marciniak, the Director-General of Azoty Tarnow, for the perfect organization of our meeting. This perfect organization and close cooperation are good prognostics for the successful implementation of this timely initiative.

Let me start from commending the efforts played by Poland in the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons /OPCW/ in The Hague. Poland belongs to a group of countries which actively pursue and promote the comprehensive implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Poland is also a leader at the OPCW with the programs to increase capacity of OPCW Members in prevention, preparedness and response against misuse of toxic chemicals. The table top exercise on preventing terrorist attacks against chemical installations organized last year in Poland succeeded in creation of a special program at the OPCW on prevention, preparedness and response against attacks on chemical plants.

The newest initiative from Poland, namely development of the international centre for chemical safety and security in Tarnow, is another important input made by Poland to enhance national, regional and international security, and to support global efforts against terrorism.

Distinguished Participants,

The importance of chemical industries in many emerging economies is on the rise. To ensure that safety and security is kept at the forefront, all sectors of the chemical industry should understand and adopt the best practices in this field. Chemical safety and security are areas of increasing importance for both the governments and the

chemical industry. Enhancing safety and security in the areas of commercial production, transportation and use of chemicals and biochemical materials is becoming ever more important. Promoting a chemical security culture will provide greater assurances that the national chemical security systems can perform their functions of preventing misuse of toxic chemicals.

Over the years many international programs have been developed to strengthen the African nations' security and potential to respond to growing threat of terrorism as well as to increase their capacity to deal with toxic chemicals and wastes.

At the same time for majority of African nations a significant challenge has emerged: how to integrate the receiving assistance and related capacity building activities into a coherent national potential, able to create, from one side, affective mechanisms and tools in the peaceful uses of chemistry, including chemical safety and security. From the other side, there is an urgent need to build synergies between national activities and develop them into coherent international programs in the area of chemical safety and security.

The initiative to establish international centre for chemical safety and security in Tarnow fully responds to these challenges. It develops further the efforts at the OPCW to offer governments and chemical industries a platform for cooperation to lessen the chemical threat and to enhance chemical safety and security. The overall goal of these activities coordinated by Mr. Krzysztof Paturej, Director of the Office of Special Projects, is to assist, mainly developing or newly industrializing countries, to establish/strengthen chemical safety and security in their peaceful uses of chemistry. This would allow OPCW to support countries to address both national priorities in chemical safety and security and disposal of toxic chemicals as well as the implementation of bilateral cooperation and access to chemicals and technologies.

I sincerely hope the new initiative will serve as a platform for excellence and cooperation in peaceful uses of chemistry and offer education and training for professionals from developing countries in chemical safety and security. The centre should be open to support the development of chemical safety and security standards and practices in broad areas of peaceful uses of chemistry in Africa, including chemical industry, research, education, laboratories and trade and transportation of toxic chemicals.

The proposed centre of excellence on chemical safety and security could provide African nations with a better use of provided resources, with better understanding of available opportunities and challenges to materialize synergies for capacity building in the spheres of chemical safety and security. Finally it would provide support in the capacity building in African countries in their efforts against terrorism.

I hope the centre will assist in raising awareness, disseminating best practice in the chemical industry and open venues for broader cooperation in chemicals and technology exchanges, academia cooperation and knowledge transfer.

Distinguished Participants,

The recent OPCW Conference on International Cooperation and Chemical Safety and Security, held in September 2011 in The Hague, was an important venue to enter into contacts and to set up parameters of our cooperation at the level of governments and among the chemical industries in the areas of chemical safety and security. The Conference offered a strong support for active engagement of the OPCW to support chemical safety and security.

I was pleased to host during the Conference the representatives of one of the biggest Polish chemicals plants, Azoty Tarnow, and the Tarnow Municipality, as well as the head of Polish Chamber of Chemical Industry. Azoty Tarnow is well known at the OPCW for its engagement in support programmes and expertise in disposal of toxic chemicals. What I found extremely valid and positive was an exemplary cooperation between Azoty Tarnow and the Tarnow Municipality in promoting this joint initiative of the centre on chemical safety and security.

Distinguished Participants,

An active approach of the OPCW and forthcoming cooperation in chemical safety and security open the door for expanding economic cooperation in chemical industry. In my view the OPCW should offer the states parties a platform of active cooperation in peaceful uses of chemistry and access to technologies and chemicals including fertilizers.

Our Seminar today and tomorrow is an important event to initiate the international and bilateral cooperation to develop and implement programmes in chemical safety and security at plants in Kenya in other African countries. This cooperation will lead to initiate exchanges and expand cooperation in chemical technologies and chemical products, including fertilizers.

I would like to confirm that this cooperation is fully supported by the Kenyan authorities.

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Distinguished Hosts, Mr Jerzy Marciniak, the Director-General of Azoty Tarnow and Mr Ryszard Scigala,
President of Tarnow,

I wish to reiterate the invitation for the representatives of Azoty Tarnow and the Tarnow Municipality, the Polish Chamber of Chemical Industry, as well as the relevant Polish authorities, to visit Kenya later this year with a

economic and technical assistance to discuss ways and means of enhancing chemical safety and security at plants in Kenya and initiating exchanges in chemical technologies and chemical products, including fertilizers.

I would like to conclude my statement with the congratulations for this important initiative. I wish you all the best in your efforts to establish the international centre for chemical safety and security in Tarnow.

I thank you very much.