Mr. Chairman,

First of all, please allow me to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of this session of the Conference. I am confident that with your rich diplomatic experience and outstanding abilities, you will surely guide this session to a success. The Chinese delegation is prepared for full cooperation with you and other delegations. I would also like to commend your predecessor, Ambassador of Japan H. E. Minoru Shibuya, for his hard work. I fully associate myself with the statement made by Ambassador of Cuba H. E. Oscar de los Reyes Ramos on behalf of the NAM States Parties and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The international security situation is undergoing profound changes. On one hand, peace and development constitute the powerful main theme of our times. Multilateralism has struck roots in hearts around the world. The international community has been witnessing intensified dialogues and cooperation in the field of security. On the other hand, international security also faces complex challenges. Traditional security issues and non-traditional ones have become interwoven. Regional hot spots have been arising one after another. Terrorism remains rampant. All this underlines the importance and urgency of reinforcing the regimes of multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the UN Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament, Chinese President Hu Jintao presented 5 propositions and 4 hopes regarding building a world that enjoys universal security. China stands ready to work with the international community in strengthening multilateral cooperation, jointly tackling challenges, advancing the process of international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and endeavouring for building a world with universal security.

Since its entry into force 12 years ago, the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter referred to as "the Convention") has become one of the most universal and successful multilateral disarmament treaties. It has been playing a significant role in eliminating the threat by chemical weapons and in making chemistry benefit mankind. The OPCW has grown into a mature and highly effective international organization that takes cooperation and consensus as the principal way of its work. States Parties have every reason to be proud of this. On the other hand, we are confronted with many challenges, which call for States Parties to heighten their sense of responsibility and to further strengthen cooperation in advancing the implementation in all areas.

Firstly, the speedy and complete destruction of chemical weapons within the timelines stipulated by the Convention remains the core task and top priority of the OPCW for now and the next few years. The Convention takes as its chief object the comprehensive prohibition and complete destruction of chemical weapons as an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, which is a vital testimony of how the multilateral disarmament process can work for safeguarding world peace and security. The international community has high expectations for this. Since the entry into force, substantial progress has been made in destroying chemical weapons. However, as the final deadline of 2012 is fast approaching, and nearly half of CW stockpiles remain to be destroyed, we do face a tough challenge in meeting the deadline. While commending them for their hard work, my delegation urges the possessor states to honour their obligations in earnest, heighten their sense of urgency, increase their inputs and ensure the completion of their destruction on time.
Secondly, the speedy, safe and complete destruction of the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China constitutes an important integral part of the core object of the Convention. It is also a major concern of the Chinese government and people. No effort should be spared in bringing about substantive progress on this issue. Freedom from threat caused by chemical weapons represents the most basic and vital security guarantee for States Parties. However, in the last 12 years since the entry into force, not a single item of the Japanese ACWs has been destroyed. The Japanese ACWs have been causing frequent human casualties and inflicting perpetual environmental pollutions. This has fully demonstrated that the Japanese ACWs present no less real threat than CW stockpiles, and that their destruction is equally urgent. Therefore, the launch of the Japanese ACW destruction brooks no further delay. Japan recently handed over to China a draft of the general destruction plan. A mobile destruction facility is expected to start its operation in Nanjing next year. China, Japan and the Secretariat have reached general agreement on the verification plan for the mobile facility. China welcomes these developments. The Chinese side urges its Japanese counterpart to take a responsible approach, honour its obligations under the Convention in earnest, intensify its inputs and launch the destruction as soon as possible, so that it will be completed by 2012. China values and welcomes the continued positive role by the Technical Secretariat in this process.

Thirdly, industry verification is an important means of preventing CW proliferation, which deserves high attention, innovative efforts and improved methodologies with a view to carrying work in this aspect forward in a fair, reasonable, balanced and effective manner. In the process, it is essential to adhere to the principle of equitable geographical balance, distribute industry verification resources reasonably and avoid over-verification in certain regions or states. Secondly, it is necessary to give full regard to the hierarchy of risks pertaining to different types of facilities and prioritize inspections accordingly, accommodate all factors, and avoid an unnecessary waste of resources. Thirdly, while relying on the Technical Secretariat's resources, we should fully utilize States Parties' resources and, at the same time, explore more reasonable and effective verification mechanisms and methodologies, so as to make non-proliferation efforts more effective while easing States Parties' burden. My delegation calls for the prompt initiation of consultations on the selection methodology for OCPF inspection and related issues. I hope that based on the aforementioned principles, substantive progress can be achieved and proper solutions be found.

Fourthly, international cooperation in the field of chemical activities is one of the vital pillars of the Convention, and thus merits high attention and full promotion. The development of such in-depth international cooperation will benefit international trade, help States Parties share fruits in this field, and assist states, especially the developing ones, to build their capabilities to implement the Convention and develop their chemical industry. My delegation commends States Parties and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts in this connection, and appeals to all parties to draw up substantive exchange and cooperation programs and increase their financial and technological inputs for the purpose. The developed nations should, in particular, intensify their assistance for and cooperation with the developing nations in this field.

Mr. Chairman,

The appointment of H. E. Ambassador Üzümcü as the next Director-General is highly significant for ensuring the organizational succession of the OPCW and guaranteeing that our cause will be carried forward and into the future. In the last 8 years, Director-General Pfirter and the Technical Secretariat under his leadership have dedicated arduous and extraordinary efforts and professionalism to ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of the Organization, and thus made significant contributions to the implementation of the Convention. My delegation commends Director-General Pfirter for his excellent leadership and managerial skills, and would like to wish him greater success in his future career.

Meanwhile, I wish to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate H. E. Ambassador Üzümcü as the recommended candidate for the next DG. His unanimous recommendation by the EC for taking up this important job demonstrates the full recognition of and high confidence in his personal qualification. More importantly, it shows the great expectations for his efforts for furthering the implementation of the Convention as well as the destruction process of CW stockpiles and of ACWs. China will give him full support and cooperation in all his endeavours, so that the work of the OPCW in all aspects will have a higher starting point and yield greater achievements.
Mr. Chairman,

China has all along participated in all the activities of the OPCW responsibly and constructively, and fulfilled all its obligations earnestly. Through unremitting efforts, China has enacted and continuously refined its legislative framework for the implementation, and has set up implementation authorities at both national and local levels, which form an implementation network with a nation-wide coverage and an effective management. China has submitted all types of declarations timely and accurately, and received over 200 inspections successfully, 33 of which have been conducted in the first 11 months of this year. At the same time, the Chinese government has valued greatly its cooperation with the OPCW. Last June, China and OPCW jointly held a customs-related workshop for the Asian region in Hong Kong which turned out to be a success. Through the OPCW Program for Africa, China has offered internships to African chemical engineers and donated PCs to 9 African States Parties. China is prepared to work with all other parties in making positive and constructive contributions to the full and effective implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese government has always attached great importance to the implementation of the Convention in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of China. With your permission, please allow me to pass the floor to Ms. Lau Lee Kwan, Deputy Director-General of Trade and Industry of the HKSAR to give a presentation on the implementation in the region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.