



***Welcoming Address at the Seminar
'Multilateral Approaches to Non-proliferation - the Chemical Dimension'***

*Sandro Calvani, UNICRI Director
OPCW Headquarters, The Hague, Wednesday 18 March 2009*

Director-General Ambassador Pfirter, Honoured guests, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Good morning.

It is with great pleasure that I greet you all at the Seminar 'Multilateral Approaches to Non-proliferation - the Chemical Dimension'. I would like to thank the OPCW for their hospitality and for their efforts to organize this Seminar.

I believe it would not be an overstatement to say that today the world is facing both a number of old unresolved tasks and many qualitatively new challenges in addressing the scourge of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time we have new windows of opportunity, but in order to use them diligently and effectively, we must work hard on strengthening the existing mechanisms and legal instruments, and look imaginatively for new forms and approaches and test new ideas. Of particular importance in this context is the need to strengthen multilateral approaches and, inter alia, develop new forms of cooperation among multilateral institutions. And, I hope, this Seminar could also make some useful contribution in this respect.

I thank you all for having so graciously accepted our invitation and I truly hope that you will feel encouraged to participate fully, share expertise and exchange ideas during this event.

This Seminar is a great opportunity to inform the countries and organisations that participate in the Knowledge Management System Project about the expertise developed by OPCW.

I would also like to take this opportunity to most sincerely welcome the distinguished governmental representatives and I would like to thank them for their interest in our activities.

A special word of thanks to all National Focal Points of the participating countries in the Knowledge Management System Project for their contributions and their hard work in collecting data for the system.

I am delighted to see the representatives of IAEA, EUROPOL the SECI Center and the BWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU), here today, and I thank them all for their ongoing support in this, as well as many other activities of UNICRI's Security Governance/Counter-Terrorism Laboratory.

The co-organisation of this event, is the fruit of a long-standing cooperation between UNICRI and the OPCW.

From 2003 onwards, OPCW has provided highly valuable contributions and support to the UNICRI Programme "Strengthening International Cooperation to Combat Illicit Trafficking and Criminal Use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) Substances and Weapons", aimed to improve countries' capabilities to prevent and combat the illicit trafficking and use of CBRN material.

The first phase of this Programme was successfully completed in 2006 in cooperation with the European Commission (DG External Relations), the technical support of the OPCW, EUROPOL and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Center, and the participation of twenty-five countries that provided relevant information.

The action oriented analysis in the first phase of the programme led to the creation Knowledge Management System on the prevention of illicit trafficking of CBRN material in South-East Europe and the Caucasus. I would like to express my gratitude for the highly valuable contribution and support provided by the OPCW in developing the UNICRI .

In this connection, I would especially like to thank Mr Paturej and his colleagues in the Office of Special Projects for their efforts to support all activities related to the Knowledge Management System and previous projects and their significant contribution to the organisation of this event.

The Knowledge Management System aims at assisting states in establishing clear channels of communication, improving information sharing and identifying and disseminating best practices on CBRN-related incidents and accessing relevant information. The Project was officially launched during the Kick-Off Meeting in May 2008 and I am very delighted to see that a fruitful cooperation has been established between countries and international and regional organizations, on this challenging topic.

The Knowledge Management System promotes the identification and dissemination of best practices and I am very delighted that today we have the opportunity to learn from the best practices of OPCW.

I would also like to thank the representative of the Rotterdam customs for sharing valuable experience with us.

I wish you all a very productive and inspiring day.

Once again, thank you all for your participation and your support to the work of our Institute.