



29 April 2015 – This year marks the centenary of the first deployment of chemical weapons on a large scale in battle. In 1915, amidst World War I, chlorine gas was first used near the Belgian town of Ieper (also known as Ypres). On this [Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare](#), the [UN](#) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons ([OPCW](#)) recall this past and aspire to shape a new future void of these weapons.

On April 29th, we mark the date on which the [Chemical Weapons Convention](#) entered into force in 1997. This provides an opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of chemical warfare, as well as to reaffirm the commitment of OPCW to the elimination of the threat of chemical weapons, thereby promoting the goals of peace, security, and multilateralism.

“Make sure that humankind is forever liberated from the ominous threat of the use of chemical weapons”

These are the powerful words of UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. In [a statement for this day](#), he emphasizes that the events in 1915 “should be a distant memory – but the frightening truth is we are still grappling with the inhumane and indiscriminate effects of chemical weapons today.”

“It is an outrage that 90 years after the 1925 Geneva Protocol and nearly 20 years after the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention the list of those we mourn on this Day only grows longer.”

He continues, “the world has learned too little from the past. Just two years ago, reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria served as a shocking wake-up call to the international community about the continuing threat posed by these inhumane weapons.”

Remember leper

On the centenary of the large-scale use of chemical weapons, OPCW highlighted the historical importance of leper.

To this end, States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention met at leper and issued the leper Declaration, reaffirming their condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and their determination for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons.

In addition, OPCW has also created a [commemorative website](#) where you can discover more about last week’s remembrance event and consult additional resources.

In the words of the Secretary-General: “On this Day of Remembrance, let us do more than recall the past; let us shape a new future by renewing our common pledge to rid the world of chemical weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.”

[#Rememberleper](#) .