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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO THE 60th PUGWASH CONFERENCE
ON SCIENCE AND WORLD AFFAIRS
Istanbul, 1 November 2013**

Delivered by Ms. Virginia Gamba, Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

I am pleased to send greetings to this 60th Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs. Your gathering comes as the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons jointly address the aftermath of the August chemical weapons attack in Syria, highlighting the urgency of the issues on your agenda.

The OPCW and the Pugwash Conferences share the well-deserved honour of being Nobel Peace Laureates. Both have demonstrated that disarmament issues lie at the heart of the global security agenda.

The challenges facing the world today cut across boundaries and sectors. Now more than ever, we need to respond through broad-based partnerships that bring together different members of the international community to reach our common goals.

Established long ago to promote scientific cooperation across the great political divide of the Cold War, Pugwash today continues to perform this great public service across the different divisions that characterize the post-Cold War world.

For more than half a century, the Pugwash Conferences have acted on the sound principle that scientists, policy-makers and other public officials should collaborate on solutions to the greatest threats to our world.

Nuclear disarmament is one of the most urgent and daunting challenges we face. Science will have an enormous role to play in developing the tools for verifying disarmament commitments and in ensuring their irreversibility.

You are uniquely equipped to ensure that developments in science and technology will serve the welfare of people rather than contribute to new forms of military competition. I especially welcome your attention to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Realizing this goal would substantially strengthen peace and security, benefiting all peoples of this region.

I wish you great success.