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VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI MADAH
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to welcome H.E. Andrea Perugini, Ambassador of the Italian Republic, and thank him for his efforts at the head of the work of the Ninety-Third Session of the Executive Council; I am confident that he will lead this work appropriately just as he has done over the past year, and I would assure him of our delegation's commitment to working in a dedicated manner towards the common objectives of our Organisation.

Likewise, we welcome H.E. Fernando Arias and thank him for his exhaustive report; we also welcome the work of all the members of the Technical Secretariat.

Venezuela aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Jafar Huseynzada of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, and in our national capacity, we would like to underscore a number of points:

- a) Our country reaffirms the need to defend the principles set out in the Convention, safeguarding the technical essence of this Organisation and preserving this multilateral space that is so important for disarmament and the non-proliferation of chemical weapons around the world.
- b) The implementation of some of the pillars of the Convention continues to be outstanding at this Organisation. Venezuela reiterates the need to progress and achieve concrete goals in the implementation of the provisions of Article XI in terms of the economic and technological development of the States Parties, as this is one of the pillars of the Convention, the implementation of which continues to be delayed in spite of its importance for all States Parties.
- c) We underscore the need to promote international cooperation for the benefit of all States Parties through the transfer of technology, materials, and equipment for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry and the elimination of any discriminatory restriction and, in this regard, we call for the rejection of coercive, unilateral measures imposed



against other States Parties, as these are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention and affect its long-term viability and have an adverse effect on the development of countries that, like ours, are seriously affected by such arbitrary unilateral sanctions.

- d) With regards to the elimination and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and Syrian chemical weapons production facilities, we welcome the reports by the Director-General and recognise the cooperation maintained by the Syrian Arab Republic with the Technical Secretariat; at the same time, we reiterate and urge that this cooperation continue successfully without any type of external interference and in strict accordance with Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- e) Venezuela once again reiterates its principled position condemning in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances.
- f) With regard to the proposal to modify the Regulations of the Advisory Board for Administrative and Financial Matters, known by its English abbreviation 'ABAF', my country reiterates its position of respect for the legitimate and sovereign right that all States parties have to nominate qualified candidates that they believe to have the professional requisites to take on the mandate of this body, and underscores the importance of preserving the diversity and plurality of its membership.
- g) With regard to the use of aerosolised central nervous system-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes, we believe it is imperative to continue the discussions from a constructive standpoint, above all within the regulatory bodies of the Organisation. It is fundamental that all States Parties have sufficient information that will make it possible to understand the extent of all the technical and legal aspects before taking any specific action. For this reason, we support searching for a consensus and dialogue among all States Parties, which will make it possible to put into place the conditions necessary for consensus-based decisions to be the standard working practice, without giving in to the temptation to force a vote that will only lead to more polarisation within our Organisation.

In conclusion, I would like to announce that the Venezuelan delegation will be distributing a national document on the elections to provide vacancies for GRULAC within the framework of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties with regard to the interpretation of Article 85 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference, and under agenda item 13, "Any other business".

Finally, we kindly request, Mr Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Third Session of the Executive Council and published on the Organisation's website.

Thank you for your kind attention.