



OPCW

Executive Council

Ninety-Sixth Session

9 – 12 March 2021

EC-96/NAT.15

9 March 2021

ENGLISH and SPANISH only

PERU

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARISOL AGÜERO COLUNGA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Ambassador Agustín Vásquez,

Please allow me to reiterate the full support of the delegation of Peru for your leadership at this session of the Executive Council, while at the same time congratulating you on your hard work overseeing our work over the course of a particularly difficult year due to the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Likewise, we express our gratitude to the Director-General, the Technical Secretariat, and the Bureau for the important efforts they have taken to make this session of the Council possible, carrying out the necessary health measures in order to safeguard the health of those here today.

We would also thank the Director-General for the comprehensive report presented at this session, and we reaffirm our commitment to carry out the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention and, by extension, of the Organisation.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the countries that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, with the exception of paragraph 13 thereof, which refers to Syria's cooperation with the OPCW.

With regard to the work of the Technical Secretariat in the Syrian Arab Republic, Peru once again expresses its absolute support for the work of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). Concerning the latest report of the DAT, we observe with great concern that the inconsistencies identified in the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic have not yet been resolved, in spite of the multiple efforts of the Director-General within the framework of the Structured Dialogue that has been in progress with the high-level authorities of said country. From here, we reiterate our call for the Syrian Arab Republic to demonstrate effective cooperation with the OPCW that would be reflected in concrete, positive results in the near future with regard to its initial declaration.

Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2*, adopted last year with Peru voting in favour, was a response to the first report of the IIT, which concluded that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Air Force used chemical weapons in Ltamenah in March 2017. We believe that this decision constitutes a good opportunity for the Syrian Arab Republic to provide information on the IIT's findings in accordance with the Convention. Certainly, we



once again regret that Syria has not provided the cooperation needed for the IIT's work, in spite of the fact that paragraph 7 of Article VII of the Chemical Weapons Convention highlights the obligation of all States Parties to undertake to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat in the exercise of all its functions.

Peru is conscious of the danger posed to humans by the use of aerosolised central nervous system-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes. For this reason, Peru will vote in favour of adopting this decision and welcomes the Director-General's request for the Organisation's Scientific Advisory Board to closely follow new developments relating to these chemicals and regularly report to the policy-making organs on their findings.

At the same time, we recognise the great efforts of the special team working on the OPCW's Centre for Chemistry and Technology project. Peru is pleased to be one of the countries that made a voluntary financial contribution to ensure for this highly specialised centre, which will undoubtedly serve as a valuable tool for capacity building in the field of chemistry and for the exchange of knowledge.

Finally, we express our appreciation for the work carried out by the co-facilitators of the group working on the governance of the Organisation, Ambassador Laura Dupuy of Uruguay, and Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus of Australia. On this matter, we would like to emphasise the importance of achieving balanced geographical distribution among the staff of the Technical Secretariat, which would allow the top professionals from Latin American countries to contribute their experience and knowledge to the Organisation. Likewise, we believe that possible flexibility in the human resources policy should be directed at highly specialised positions, such as those held by inspectors.

We kindly request, Mr Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of this session of the Council.

Thank you.

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