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**SAUDI ARABIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ZIAD BEN MAACHI AL ATIYAH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TO  
THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure to welcome you again, Excellency Mr Chairperson, Ambassador Agustín Gómez. I am confident that your expertise and wisdom will contribute to the success of this session for which we express our support. I would like to express our appreciation to the Director-General for his comprehensive report, as well as to all staff members of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation. Also, I welcome the statement delivered by Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and China.

My country attaches great importance to implementing its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, proceeding from its belief in the Convention's objectives and consistent with its principled policy aimed at enhancing cooperation in the prohibition and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including making the Middle East region free from all weapons of mass destruction. In addition, my country places tremendous importance on achieving the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention, given its role in enhancing international peace and security. In this regard, we urge all States that have not yet done so to join the Convention.

My country's delegation reaffirms that the use of chemical weapons and chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances is reprehensible and totally contrary to the provisions of the Convention and the legal norms and standards of the international community.

My country's delegation stresses that, despite the progress made in the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, the discrepancies and inconsistencies in Syria's initial declaration and subsequent submissions pose many questions. My country's delegation calls upon the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW with a view to implementing all decisions pertaining to the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

My country's delegation has read the Report by the Director-General EC-96/DG.1 (dated 14 October 2020), informing that the Syrian authorities did not implement the measures contained in Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2 adopted following the issuance of the



first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) on the perpetrators of the chemical weapons use in Syria. The report concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe that the perpetrators of the use of sarin as a chemical weapon in Ltamenah on 24 and 30 March 2017, and the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Ltamenah on 25 March 2017 were individuals belonging to the Syrian Arab Air Force. My country's delegation reaffirms its principled position denouncing and condemning any use of chemical weapons by anyone and the need to hold the perpetrators accountable. My country's delegation reaffirms its support for the work of the IIT and calls upon the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the team and grant it access to Syrian territory and to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW with a view to implementing all decisions on the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

My country's delegation calls for positive engagement and for more consultations and discussions among Member States before adopting any decision on the proposal concerning the use of central nervous system-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes.

In conclusion, the Convention stresses the importance of economic and technological development and international cooperation in the chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. While appreciating the past efforts, we are of the view that there is a pressing need for more efforts to meet the requirements of Article XI of the Convention, particularly as regards the transfer to developing States of technology, equipment, and expertise relating to chemical industries for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, and the removal of barriers imposed by numerous States in this regard. This will help enhance international economic development and will benefit all parties.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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