



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Twenty-Sixth Session  
29 November – 3 December 2021

C-26/NAT.50  
29 November 2021  
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ZIAD BIN MAASHI AL ATIYAH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA  
TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

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

At the outset, I am pleased to congratulate the Ambassador of Norway, His Excellency Bård Ivar Svendsen, on his election as Chairperson of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am confident that your diplomatic experience and great wisdom will contribute to the success of this session. I take this opportunity to thank the Chairperson of the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference, the Ambassador of Mexico, His Excellency José Antonio Trejo, for his able leadership of the Conference. I am also pleased to express our deep appreciation and thanks to the Director-General, His Excellency Fernando Arias, to his aids at the Technical Secretariat and to all staff members of the Organisation for their efforts to hold the Conference in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also 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.

Convinced of the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention, my country attaches great importance to implementing its obligations under the Convention, in keeping with its consistent policy aimed at promoting 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. My country also attaches great importance to achieving the universality of the Convention in view of its role in enhancing international peace and security, and we urge States that have not yet done so to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. My country's delegation affirms that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances is deplorable and in complete contradiction with the provisions of the Convention and with the legal norms and standards of the international community.

Despite the progress made in the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, the discrepancies and inconsistencies in Syria's initial declaration and subsequent submissions are a source of concern for us. My country's delegation calls on the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation and its teams in order to implement all decisions relating to chemical weapons use in Syria. Also, it expresses its firm position condemning and deploring the use of chemical weapons by any party whatsoever and stresses the need to bring perpetrators to account.



I would like to voice my delegation's support for the draft decision entitled "Understanding Regarding the Aerosolised Use of Central Nervous System-Acting Chemicals for Law Enforcement Purposes", as it is in line with the purpose of the Convention and does not involve any amendment or addition, nor does it create any new obligations. In addition, the draft decision is scientifically supported by the report of the Scientific Advisory Board of the OPCW, which indicated that, when delivered as an aerosol, these chemicals have a very low safety margin and cause death or permanent, irreparable damage.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about extraordinary circumstances that made the OPCW adopt measures and precautions consistent with those extraordinary circumstances. In order to enable the Executive Council to convene regularly in emergency circumstances, the proposal by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany is both timely and appropriate, calling for an Executive Council decision to allow for convening Executive Council meetings and sessions remotely, using virtual meeting technology, or in another venue in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In this connection, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is pleased to be one of the sponsors of the draft decision adopting the German proposal, as it lays the foundation for a statutory mechanism for the Council to meet regularly and fills a procedural gap. We call upon Executive Council members to support and adopt the decision by consensus at the earliest session, in order to facilitate the work of the august Council in emergency circumstances.

My country's delegation voices its support for the draft Budget of the OPCW for 2022–2023. It hopes that the Conference adopts the draft Budget by consensus, as much as possible. We call upon the Member States to support it in order to enable the Organisation to conduct its activities and fulfil its duties.

The Convention stresses the importance of economic and technological development, as well as international cooperation in chemical activities for purposes not prohibited thereunder. While acknowledging the efforts made in the past, we believe that more efforts are urgently needed in order to meet the requirements of Article XI of the Convention, in particular with respect to the transfer to developing States of technology, equipment, and expertise in chemical industries not prohibited under the Convention, as well as the removal of barriers imposed by many States in this regard. This will help promote international economic development for the benefit of all parties. In this context, my country has made a donation for the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology, for which the foundation stone was laid in a ceremony organised recently, marking a turning point in the journey of our esteemed Organisation. The new Centre will be a fundamental bridge for achieving States Parties' aspirations, particularly in the transfer of technology and technical assistance to States Parties, and a beacon of science and knowledge in the domain of chemistry.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, I would like to express profuse thanks to the Director-General for his outstanding efforts over the past period in managing the work of the Organisation with the utmost competence and professionalism, which we have witnessed since his appointment as Director-General of the Organisation. In this connection, I am pleased to voice my country's support for the reappointment of the Director-General for a second term of office.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of the current session of the Conference and posted on the external server and public website of the Organisation.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.