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ECUADOR

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ANDRÉS TERÁN PARRAL PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Madam Chairperson of the Executive Council,
Mr Director-General of the OPCW and members of the Technical Secretariat,
Your Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

The delegation of Ecuador would like to begin this statement expressing its recognition of the work done by H.E. Abdelouahab Bellouki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco and the outgoing Chairperson of the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Likewise, this delegation welcomes H.E. Gudrun Lingner, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the OPCW, as she assumes the interim chairmanship of the Council. Our delegation also wishes every success to H.E. Eniola Olaitan Ajayi, Ambassador of Nigeria, who will assume the chairmanship of the Council for the rest of the term in representation of the Africa Group. This delegation also wishes to extend its greetings to H.E. Fernando Arias, Director-General of the OPCW, and to the Technical Secretariat.

Ecuador condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons and firmly believes that there is no justification whatsoever for the use of weapons or toxic chemicals against anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. Regrettably, the threats facing the international community associated with the use of chemical weapons are becoming increasingly critical.

Ecuador maintains its firm conviction regarding the prohibition and total elimination of this category of weapons of mass destruction as the Organisation's main priority. This delegation wishes to strengthen Ecuador's commitment to the work of the OPCW in implementing its important mandate, and expresses its gratitude for the efforts and work that have been carried out towards said implementation.

The delegation of Ecuador is also conscious, in line with the second paragraph of the preamble of the Chemical Weapons Convention, that this important international body looks to contribute to the implementation of the object and purpose of the United Nations Charter—specifically the maintenance of international peace and security via disarmament.

In this regard, this delegation recognises that the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council is being conducted within the context of the regrettable armed conflict initiated by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Ecuador condemns in the strongest possible terms the



aggression carried out by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, in contradiction to the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or the independence and sovereignty of any State, in observance of paragraph 4, Article 2 of the United Nations Charter. Ecuador firmly maintains that any armed aggression infringes upon the principles of the United Nations Charter and, in particular, the peaceful solution of disputes.

It is imperative that the security of the civilian population be guaranteed and their lives respected in accordance with the provisions of international humanitarian law. In this context, Ecuador calls equally for respect for the integrity of Ecuadorian citizens in conflict zones.

Ecuador, loyal to the principles that guide its foreign policy, calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and reiterates its conviction that it is the right of every country to live in peace and with dignity.

In this new international context, Ecuador—in line with the values and principles that guide its international policy under the Convention—believes that it is fundamental to work together in order to put into place mechanisms to prevent and respond to the undesired re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons around the world. In this regard, my country supports the technical work of the OPCW towards these important objectives and calls for strict compliance with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as the avoidance of any threats or provocations within this context. Ecuador notes with profound concern the information provided by the Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the OPCW in its Note Verbale No. 61219/30-196/50-3, dated 27 February 2022.

With regard to the information provided by the Director-General on the global destruction of chemical weapons, Ecuador notes the progress made and believes it is still necessary to intensify cooperation with the Technical Secretariat in order to resolve outstanding matters and prevent non-compliance with the Convention.

In this regard, Ecuador reiterates its support for the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) concerning the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. This delegation notes with concern the conclusions of the two most recent reports issued by the Fact-Finding Mission, which found that chemical weapons were used in the town of Marea on 1 and 3 September 2015, and in Kafr Zeita on 1 October 2016. Ecuador trusts that the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat will continue to facilitate their cooperation and efforts to comply with the Chemical Weapons Convention and the other relevant decisions of the Conference and the Executive Council, with the necessary participation of the Syrian authorities.

This delegation reiterates that our country advocates for the adequate distribution and rational use of available funds with greater efficiency, as well as observance of the Convention's mandate on gender parity and geographic representation across the composition of the Technical Secretariat.

Finally, Ecuador trusts in the leadership of the Executive Council to meet its objective of guiding the Organisation in carrying out its mandate and tackling current challenges, with a view to ensuring that it is managed in a solid manner and will be capable of continuing its mission to support and preserve global peace.

Madam Chairperson, I request that this statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council and published on the extranet and the Organisation's website.

Thank you.

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