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ALGERIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SALIMA ABDELHAK
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF ALGERIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE 100TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

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

First of all, I would like to extend my congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Ziad M.D. Al Atiyah, the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as Chairperson of the 100th Session of the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We are confident that he will steer the work of this session to a successful outcome. We would like to extend to him the assurances of my personal support and that of my delegation and our complete willingness to contribute actively to the success of the Executive Council's work.

I would like also to extend my thanks to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias for his report, and his unfailing efforts in carrying out his duties to help the Organisation achieve its objectives. My thanks go to the members of the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) for their efficiency in organising the sessions of the OPCW policy-making organs and their cooperation in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention).

The Algerian delegation aligns itself with the statement of H.E. Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, and with that of H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the OCPW, on behalf of the African Group.

Attached to international peace and security and convinced that the OPCW is one of the means to that end as a part of the multilateral disarmament system, Algeria fully subscribes to the principles, objectives, and spirit of the Convention.

Algeria condemns any use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances and has always committed to actively contribute to the work of the Organisation since it was established in order to achieve a world free from weapons of mass destruction. We commend the major achievements in the implementation of the Convention, in particular with regard to the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. This would not have been possible



without the mobilisation of the States Parties to the Convention and their continued cooperation.

Today, we are increasingly aware of the new threats our Organisation faces that are chemical terrorism, transnational crime, and the illicit trafficking of chemical weapons. The activities of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism have enabled us to gain a better grasp of these threats and we do need to fight them together through appropriate response strategies to be developed by the OPCW at the global, regional, and national level.

The preparations for the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference) scheduled for May 2023 constitute an opportunity to build on the Organisation's accomplishments taking into account its various challenges and threats with the view to agree on effective recommendations and measures that would guide our actions in the next five years. We welcome, in this regard, the work already undertaken by the Open-Ended Working Group set up for the preparation of the Fifth Review Conference. We commend the consultation process engaged with States Parties by the Chairperson of the Group, H.E Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the OPCW, which enabled the adoption of the group's work plan. As a member of the group, I would like to reiterate my support and the full willingness of my delegation to contribute to the success of its endeavour and to help bring the work of the Fifth Review Conference to a successful outcome.

As a State Party to the Convention, Algeria has mobilised its relevant authorities for the implementation of the Convention at the national level. These authorities continue to make relentless efforts to build on the experience they have capitalised and to update their expertise in order to optimise their abilities to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Indeed, experts from Algeria have always participated actively to OPCW seminars, training courses and capacity building activities covering different topics even during the Covid 19 pandemic.

In this regard, we are grateful to the Secretariat for ensuring, especially to Africa, the continuity of the international assistance even through the constraints we all had to face. We welcome the resumption of its "in-person activities" including the "training course on conducting sampling and analysis in a highly contaminated environment for African states" which is organised annually between Algeria and the Secretariat and which will take place soon this year in Algiers.

Algeria would like to express its appreciation of the progress made in the implementation of the work plan of the twinning project between the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie and the German Research Institute for Protective Technologies and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Protection that started in 2020, in collaboration with the Secretariat.

Algeria is one of the countries that strongly believes in South-South cooperation and makes itself available to share with countries in our region and sub-region its good practises and the achievements of its national authorities within the framework of the implementation of the Convention. We consider the initiative of the OPCW to create regional centres of excellence on the African continent likely to contribute to its concretisation through strengthening cooperation between African countries and improving the performance of their national

entities. My country has supported it since its launch, and I seize this opportunity to reiterate Algeria's full willingness to host the centre for the North Africa and Sahel region.

Along the same lines, Algeria looks forward to the 2023 completion of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), considering its essential role for the implementation of the Convention, particularly in terms of capacity building for developing countries, especially in Africa. My country's financial voluntary contribution to funding this project demonstrates its support to this centre and its desire to contribute to the success of its activities.

I do believe we need, now more than ever, to preserve the spirit of consensus and cooperation that has characterised the OPCW work since its creation in order to move forward and to overcome the new threats. The split of the Members of our Organisation regarding some issues constitutes a threat in itself. Indeed, the absence of consensus may distance our Organisation from its technical character and make it hostage to political considerations. Let's recall that the Nobel Prize was won by OPCW in 2013 thanks to the spirit of responsible and consensus-based cooperation that enabled the work undertaken to achieve the objectives laid down in the Convention.

Regarding the chemical weapons programme in Syria, we encourage the continuation of constructive and productive cooperation between the Syrian authorities and the Secretariat. In order to find appropriate solutions that can definitely settle the outstanding issues, my delegation recommends further dialogue and encourages negotiation.

Mr Chairperson, finally, my delegation believes that the guiding principles behind our collective action should be the implementation of the Convention and its objectives in a way all parties and regions could benefit from its advantages in a balanced manner. Our efforts must also be focused on the peaceful uses of chemistry and on the achievement of the development goals of our countries.

Strengthening international cooperation, assistance, and the exchange of experiences are all priorities. In this connection, we welcome the inclusion, at the initiative of the African Group, of a recommendation in the decision on the biennial OPCW Programme and Budget for 2022–2023, adopted by the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, inviting the States Parties and the Secretariat to work together to ensure complete and effective implementation of cooperation programmes by considering appropriate measures, including the retention of unspent funds for cooperation programmes in a special fund.

We consider that particular attention must be paid to the African continent and to the capacity building of its national entities according to their needs and priorities. In this regard, I would like to underscore the importance of continuing and consolidating the OPCW Africa Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Convention, currently in its fifth phase. We consider that this programme should be given appropriate funding, through the allocation of sufficient resources at regular and predictable levels in the Organisation's regular budget. We welcome the preparations for its ensuing sixth phase that should start in the beginning of 2023, taking into account the survey on needs assessment, in which Algeria contributed, to define the main priorities and the key relevant activities to be retained for the next period. We express our full willingness and readiness to continue contributing to its conception and implementation.

I would like to take this opportunity to call for the promotion of better representation of African candidates within the bodies of the Organisation, which still doesn't reach the expected levels, especially in positions within the Secretariat.

Finally, I would request this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and that it be published on the OPCW's external and public website. Thank you.

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