



OPCW

Executive Council

100th Session
5 – 7 July 2022

EC-100/NAT.66
5 July 2022
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW
AT THE 100TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates:

The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) expresses its gratitude to the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Eniola Olaitan Ajayi, who presided over the Executive Council until this past 11 May. Likewise, we welcome and wish every success for the new Chairperson, H.E. Ziad M.D. Al Atiyah, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; we assure him of our willingness to collaborate under his leadership in a dedicated manner and towards the common goals of the Organisation.

Likewise, we welcome the Director-General and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council and their reports. We also value the work carried out by the staff of the OPCW and their constant dedication towards achieving the goals of the Organisation.

The Venezuelan delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Fikrat Akhundov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its commitment to complete global chemical disarmament under rigorous and authentic international control in compliance with applicable international law and towards the suppression and eradication of all weapons of mass destruction, the existence of which constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

This delegation recalls the recent twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and in that context underscores the work of the OPCW and its achievement in the destruction of most of the world's combined stockpiles of chemical weapons with the active participation of the States Parties; however, this task must continue and overcome the growing politicisation of the use of chemical weapons, which substantially limits the validity of the Organisation's work. This is why we are strongly calling to strengthen the culture of consensus, cooperation, and multilateralism.



We wish to express our support for the preparations for the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is to be held in April 2023 and which represents an opportunity to strengthen the OPCW and the commitment of the States Parties to implement the Convention in line with the principles of the United Nations system, all towards the achievement of universality, thus guaranteeing a world free of chemical weapons through close cooperation among the Member States.

Along these lines, our delegation is concerned that the only possessor State may not meet the deadline set for the destruction of its chemical stockpile. For this reason, we urge the United States of America, in its position as the sole possessor State, to comply fully with the provisions of the Convention, which have been the focus of the efforts of the OPCW's policy-making organs, and in full compliance with the existing international obligations that regulate the work of the Organisation in such an important matter.

Regarding the elimination and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, Venezuela underscores the contents of the reports presented periodically to this Council, which acknowledge the effective destruction of said declared weapons and facilities as the result of collaborative work with the OPCW; this allows us to recognise the goals achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in very challenging security conditions, while confronting a multifaceted plan of aggression—both internal and external. Thus, we hope for the continuation of successful collaboration between both parties on the full spectrum of issues that can be addressed, without any external interference, and with full respect for Syria's territorial and political sovereignty.

Venezuela, as a State committed to the non-use of chemical weapons, reiterates its concern regarding the repeated attempts to make allegations against States Parties based on information taken from open sources, such as media outlets and/or non-governmental organisations. This dynamic presents a challenge for the work of the Organisation, which has at its disposal a full regulatory and technical structure that should be utilised in the case of any doubt or allegation of the use of chemical weapons.

The implementation of some of the pillars of the Convention continues to be an outstanding issue at this Organisation, which is why our delegation reiterates the need to continue working on concrete achievements related to the implementation of the provisions set out in Article XI, which supports the economic and technological development of the States Parties via the transfer of technology, materials, and equipment for chemistry for peaceful purposes, as well as the elimination of any discriminatory restriction.

Likewise, international cooperation and assistance constitute a fundamental pillar of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and we highly value the continued allocation of resources by the Organisation to ensure that this commitment is met, with special attention given to efforts aimed at building the capacities of States Parties with developing economies, while bearing in mind the challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. That notwithstanding, we would encourage boosting the efforts being made, in order to respond to the challenges posed by current global socioeconomic conditions.

Furthermore, work in support of international cooperation and assistance is not compatible with the imposition of unilateral coercive measures which, in blatant violation of international law, are contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the Convention. It is with this in mind that we reiterate before this Council our condemnation of the sanctions

currently imposed against the Venezuelan people by the United States and other regional blocs, which hinder—among other things that are of major importance to our country, both domestic and external—our work within the OPCW.

With regard to the organisational governance of the Organisation, we share our support for the recruitment of staff to the Technical Secretariat that takes into account cross-sectional criteria such as geographic representation and gender perspective, which will make it possible to have professionals coming from all regions working within the OPCW, while bearing in mind principles such as equal opportunity and transparency. Likewise, we value the nineteenth meeting of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the conclusions of which should acknowledge the legal value of the international commitment to guarantee the development of the activities of the Organisation and its Member States by overcoming bilateral situations and responding to the situations that have arisen with the necessary explanations to the satisfaction of the parties involved.

The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has conveyed to the Chairperson of the Executive Council that it hopes that the 100th Session will conclude by addressing the fundamental principles of the United Nations system and will reaffirm the defence of the principles set out in the Convention, thus safeguarding the technical essence of this Organisation and preserving this multilateral space that is so important for global disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons.

Thank you for your attention to the position of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela at this 100th Session of the Executive Council.

In closing, we request that this statement be considered an official document of this session and that it be published on the Catalyst platform as well as the Organisation's website.

Thank you.

--- 0 ---