



INDIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. REENAT SANDHU
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
4-7 October, 2022**

Mr. Chairman,
Director General
Ambassadors and delegates,

On behalf of my delegation, let me begin by complementing His Excellency Ziad Al Atiyah, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, for his able leadership as Chairperson of the Executive Council. We are confident that you will conduct the session smoothly and successfully. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Indian delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to applaud the commitment of the Technical Secretariat, led by Director-General Fernando Arias, towards implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by H.E. Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of NAM States Parties and China.

India attaches high importance to the Convention, a unique and non-discriminatory disarmament instrument that serves as a model for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. India remains steadfast in its commitment for the full, effective and non-

discriminatory implementation of the Convention and supports all efforts to achieve its universality.

India condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody and under any circumstances. We believe that all investigations into the alleged use of chemical weapons should be impartial, credible and objective, and should be conducted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, in conformity with the delicate balance of power and responsibility enshrined under it. India firmly believes that impartiality and integrity of OPCW must be preserved and maintained under all circumstances.

We take note of the progress in the destruction of stockpiles of remaining chemical weapons and reiterate the importance of adhering to the scheduled timeline.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, India has actively cooperated with the OPCW for inspections of its declared industrial facilities. In light of emerging challenges and scientific advancements, India believes that OPCW needs to evolve a more transparent, equitable and objective criteria and modalities for the inspections.

The challenges ahead require a strong collective reaffirmation of our commitment and resolve. We urge all States parties to work together in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the verification system. Progress in science and technology has an inevitable impact on the implementation of the Convention, and in this regard we note efforts of the Scientific Advisory Board to remain relevant by adjusting to the changing requirements.

India stands for effective implementation of Article XI to promote peaceful uses of chemical technology and enhancement of international

cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. It is important that the provisions of the Convention are implemented in a manner that does not hinder legitimate activities, especially in developing countries.

India has collaborated with the Technical Secretariat for conducting various training programs to enhance analytical and laboratory skills of States Parties. Now in its fifth year of implementation, the programme has trained experts from more than 50 States Parties including from the GRULAC and Africa region. India stands ready to assist OPCW in its future capacity building efforts. We also look forward to the inauguration of the ChemTech Centre in 2023 and hope that it will further strengthen training, technical partnerships and exchanges between scientists and researchers in the field of chemistry.

Mr. Chairman,

India welcomes the preparatory work for the fifth Review Conference in 2023, started under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Permanent Representative of Estonia. We appreciate the consultative manner of discussions and hope that the process will be based on constructive engagement, unity of purpose, and shared commitment to advance balanced implementation of the Convention by the States Parties. We emphasise the importance of the principle of consensus and the need for decisions to be taken by the States Parties collectively in close consultation and cooperation with each other.

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

Thank you.
