

**Statement by Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the OPCW
at the 101st Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
(04 - 07 October 2022)**

Mr. Chairman,

I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in your work. I believe that with your diplomatic acumen and insight, you will be able to steer this session to a successful conclusion.

We also appreciate the work being done by the Organization under the leadership of Director General OPCW Ambassador Fernando Arias.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

Mr. Chairman,

This meeting of the Executive Council is the second after the host country has done away with most COVID-19 related restrictions and it brings me immense pleasure to see us all back in-person in this hall. We are also meeting right after the United Nations General Assembly opening at the UN Headquarters in New York where we saw leaders congregated in-person to tackle global issues and many were defined as interconnected crises that required a global response.

The flooding in Pakistan is one of them, a direct consequence of climate change, affecting 33 million people facing diverse hazards. It is a catastrophe of unprecedented nature and we thank each and every country that has sent assistance to Pakistan. We have mobilized our resources to

deal with the aftermath of these floods but much more needs to be done as the gap between needs and available resources is far too much.

Mr. Chairman,

We are all committed to the key goal enshrined in the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC); to work towards a world free of the menace of chemical weapons. It is a testament of this organization's success that we are almost rid of all declared stockpiles of chemical weapons, making the CWC one of the most successful disarmament treaties till date.

However, now we see this organization is drifting away from the cornerstone principle of consensus that is the basis of disarmament. It is not through politicization that we reach amicable and trustworthy disarmament but by dialogue, understanding and continued cooperation. It is therefore, our earnest desire and hope that we will revert to our long-held tradition of consensus when it comes to decision making in this organization.

Mr Chairman,

We appreciate that the destruction of chemical weapons as envisaged till September 2023 is still on track and will be achieved as per the timelines set.

We have noted the report by on the progress in the elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme, we welcome cooperation between the Secretariat and Syria. Pakistan supports and encourages constructive engagement between Syria and Technical Secretariat for early resolution of all outstanding matters through dialogue and mutual agreement.

Mr Chairman,

The issue of abandoned chemical weapons is also of interest and we note DG's report on overall progress with respect to the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in the People's Republic of China and we welcome the virtual visit to Haerbaling ACW destruction site in Jilin Province in China. The report mentions that both China and Japan have formulated a way forward towards destruction beyond 2022 and we hope that it will be achieved in the future.

Mr Chairman,

My delegation recognizes the impact of inflation and pandemic related economic issues that have been addressed in the budget. We have also noted the assessed contributions have not been changed since CSP 26. We do however, note with concern the programme and budget for 2023 also contains the reference for special fund for the IT infrastructure, in pursuance of decision C-SS-4/Dec.3, a decision that did not enjoy consensus.

Mr Chairman,

With regard to the rehiring of inspectors in the OPCW owing to the high turnover expected in 2023. We understand the need of any organization to hold on to trained staff within existing rules. My delegation takes this opportunity to convey the hope that going forward other factors including equitable geographical distribution would be taken into account in recruitments.

We also note the recent note by the Technical Secretariat on the anticipated new programmes and activities at the CCT. Pakistan stands ready to contribute more to the Chemtech centre including through capacity building activities, exchange of expertise and training.

Mr Chairman,

We have read DG's report on the implementation of Article VII of the convention and urge the TS to continue its cooperation with states parties if they are struggling to meet their obligation under the article. We also note the reports on article X and XI, and note with satisfaction the continuation of capacity building programmes. With regards to the decision C-16/DEC.10, we recognize that there are still gaps in its effective implementation and we hope that going forward all States Parties can find non-discriminatory benefit as envisioned in article XI.

This is a unique year for us, Mr Chairperson, we celebrate 25 years of entry into force of the CWC and we prepare for the 5th Review Conference of the OPCW. We are thus presented with new possibilities and avenues of cooperation. My delegation commends the preparatory work done by the OEWG for RC-5 under the able leadership of Ambassador Kuusing of Estonia.

In the end, Mr Chairperson, allow me to go back to the reference to the UNGA and draw a parallel to our 101st session of the EC. My delegation strongly believes that it is time that we revert to the normal conduct of business in this premises. While preparedness is key to respond to extraordinary circumstances but do hope that extraordinary does not become the ordinary in our working.

I thank you.
