



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Twenty-Seventh Session  
28 November – 1 December 2022

C-27/NAT.65  
28 November 2022  
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

**CUBA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ANET PINO RIVERO  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE OPCW  
AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF  
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates,

Please allow me to congratulate H.E. Vusimuzi Madonsela, Ambassador of South Africa, on his election as Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties, as well as the new Vice-Chairpersons and the other members of the Bureau, to whom we wish every success in their tasks.

The Cuban delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Convention and China.

We find ourselves in a decisive year for the Organisation marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Convention, combined with preparations for the Fifth Review Conference.

The best tribute to the Convention would be the implementation, by the sole possessor State, of our main objective: to complete the destruction of declared chemical stockpiles.

The year 2023 should mark a milestone in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, when we will finally be able to fully implement one of the primary mandates of the Convention: the total destruction of all chemical weapons.

It will also be an important time for reflecting upon how much progress we have been able to make and how to best tackle the challenges that still lie ahead.

Cuba, which is firmly in favour of banning and eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, will actively participate in these processes, defending strict compliance with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, reaffirming its commitment to the OPCW, and speaking out in defence of the letter and spirit of the Convention.

The gradual perfection of working methods and observance of existing procedures by the decision-making bodies, in line with the provisions of the Convention, are goals that we must set.



This will allow us to boost inclusion and transparency, and prevent the politicisation of the Organisation's discussions, so that we will be able to return to the necessary practice of consensus when taking decisions.

We have observed with concern the increased frequency of raising political issues, deviating from the essentially technical mandate of the OPCW. This situation should be remedied as soon as possible.

We must maintain the technical essence of the OPCW in order to achieve the purposes for which it was created. It is necessary to focus our efforts on due compliance with the mandate and pillars of the Convention.

We insist on the importance of creating all conditions for the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

Strengthening the facilitations that evaluate issues of special relevance for the future of the Organisation will serve as an important tool that must be continuously promoted.

Progress in the universality of the Convention, by achieving extensive membership among developing countries, confirms the need to make progress in establishing an integral approach in the field of international cooperation and assistance for both the present and the future of the OPCW, given its tangible benefits for all States Parties. This can be strengthened even further through the complete elimination of chemical weapons, which is slated for 2023.

International cooperation requires greater resources—both financial and human resources—as well as the participation and collaborative efforts of the States Parties and the OPCW's Technical Secretariat in the full implementation of Article XI of the Convention.

We believe that the identification of the needs of developing countries should be improved, as well as the technologies and equipment that developed countries can offer, as a way of guaranteeing and reinforcing programmes in cooperation, such as the exchange of equipment; this is very useful for building the capacities of laboratories and contributing to the development of the chemical industry or the applications derived from it.

It is important that the Technical Secretariat maintain its level of expertise in order to carry out its verification activities, bearing in mind the challenges posed by new technologies and growth in the chemical industry, while also promoting an adequate training programme that will guarantee a succession mechanism in line with the tenure policy, with adequate geographical distribution and improved gender parity.

The tendency to contaminate and broaden the mandate of the Convention through the implementation of initiatives that extend beyond it and do not have a consensus among the States Parties should be avoided.

We object to the decision adopted at the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, which limits the rights of the Syrian Arab Republic within this Organisation.

We believe that the exchange under way between the Syrian authorities and the Technical Secretariat is a positive step towards resolving outstanding issues, and will help make it possible to reach common ground towards continuing the work of the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT).

We have noted that 24 rounds of consultations have been held between Syria and the DAT.

We are pleased to see that Syria remains willing to cooperate and has accepted the Secretariat's proposal to use correspondence as a means of submitting the documentation requested by the DAT until it is possible to hold the twenty-fifth round of consultations.

We reiterate that any interaction with Syria should take place without any external interference, with full respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in agreement with its authorities. In this regard, its sovereign decisions and legitimate concerns are to be respected.

With regard to the draft Programme and Budget of the Organisation for 2023, we reiterate the need to adopt decisions separately for each of the subjects contained therein, in line with the OPCW Financial Regulations.

This has been the practice for over 20 years, rather than the adoption of one omnibus decision that includes subjects of different natures and scope, both procedural matters as well as matters of substance. We reiterate the need to observe existing rules and practices for issues that are as fundamental as this one.

We note with concern that the suggested increase in the Budget does not include any increases for international cooperation or technical assistance activities.

It is necessary that the inequalities currently in the Organisation's budget be corrected, as these two essential pillars of the Convention are being left by the wayside.

We recognise the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat, and the International Cooperation and Assistance Division in particular, to maintain the vitality of training programmes, including at the most challenging moments of the pandemic, through the use of information and communications technologies.

We welcomed the organisation of the annual workshop on the implementation of decision C-16/DEC.10 this past 14 November.

That notwithstanding, we reiterate the need to expand existing programmes and ensure that resources are adequate for the full implementation of Article XI of the Convention in such a way so as to contribute to the economic and technological development of the States Parties, which constitutes a need and is one of the Organisation's priorities.

We reiterate our recognition of the facilitation group preparing a compendium of ideas, which will serve as a solid base upon which to continue working, including within the framework of the Fifth Review Conference, so that we are able to work towards the adoption of an action plan that will guarantee the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of this important Article and pillar of the Convention.

It is precisely the implementation of Article XI that continues to be violated by the United States, which has maintained an economic, commercial, and financial embargo against Cuba for over 60 years, which is greatly overreaching extraterritorial scope; it restricts and hinders the trade and development of scientific and technological knowledge, as well as the exchange of knowledge, chemicals, and equipment in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes as set out in the Convention: industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical, and other peaceful purposes.

The national document of the Republic of Cuba entitled “Difficulties and Obstacles encountered by Cuba affecting the full implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention”, which was circulated as an official document of this Conference with the symbol C-27/NAT.2, sets out an exhaustive list of examples of how one State Party is being affected, in violation of this Convention.

We have been participating, and we will continue to do so, in the sessions of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference.

We congratulate the Ambassador of Estonia, the Chairperson of this Group, and the Vice-Chairpersons, the Ambassadors of Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Algeria, for their work.

I reiterate the willingness of our delegation to contribute in a constructive manner to the performance of the Working Group towards achieving a positive outcome in returning to the practice of a consensus within the OPCW.

We hope that the results of the Fifth Review Conference will make it possible to strengthen the full implementation of the Convention, in particular the provisions on international cooperation and technical assistance, to the benefit of the Member States.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the willingness of our country to continue providing support and sharing its experience in implementing the activities and general obligations within the field of activities that are not prohibited by the Convention, national implementation measures, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, and international cooperation and general assistance.

We express our willingness to contribute experts and knowledge to the Centre for Chemistry and Technology, an institution that we recognise can play an important role in the work of the OPCW, especially in terms of training, capacity building, and international cooperation.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and published on the Organisation’s website and Catalyst platform.

Thank you.

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