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سفارة الجزائر بلاهاي

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Salima Abdelhak
Permanent Representative of the People's
Democratic Republic of Algeria to the OPCW**

**Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the
operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

15- 19 May 2023

Mr. Chairperson,

Mr. Director-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We would like, first to congratulate H.E. Henk Cor van der Kwast, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the OPCW on his election as Chairperson of the Fifth Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We have full confidence in his ability to guide the session to a successful conclusion and express our support for his efforts.

We would like to extend our appreciation to Ambassador Fernando Arias, the Director-General, for his report, and commend the dedicated efforts of the Technical Secretariat staff in organizing this session and facilitating its preparatory process.

My gratitude goes to H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing for his efforts in leading the negotiation process as a Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group for the preparation of the Fifth Review Conference and the preparation of its Draft Provisional Text.

The Algerian delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Rahman Mustafayev, Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Convention and China, and with the statement of H.E. Ambassador Francis Danti Kotia, the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the OCPW, on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are currently witnessing a historic moment, the fifth review Conference of the CWC operation. This is a momentous occasion to envisage a fresh vision for the Organization, capitalizing on our past accomplishments, rectifying any discrepancies, and adjusting to the changing dynamics of the world with the view to ensure CWC a central role in the disarmament architecture and its contribution to the international peace and security across the world. To guarantee the success of this significant milestone, it is imperative for us to demonstrate unwavering political will and commitment towards the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). We recommend an open, inclusive and constructive dialogue to advance our shared vision for the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

Algeria regards the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) as an integral part of the disarmament framework, making a significant contribution to international peace and security, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter by facilitating the elimination of a complete category of weapons of mass destruction.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) have demonstrated their significant relevance in numerous aspects. The objective of destroying all declared chemical weapons is nearly achieved, and we eagerly look forward to celebrating this momentous in September. The Convention has established robust verification regime and put in place tools for international cooperation and assistance that are likely to ensure the successful implementation of the convention's provisions. The most recent addition to this framework is the Chem-Tech Centre, which we had the honour and pride of inaugurating just few days ago. Our expectations for its impact are high, as we aspire to make it a catalyst for a world of peace and development.

Since its entry into force, a large number of countries were successfully mobilized to adhere to the principles and objectives of the Convention and to extend its membership. It is however crucial for CWC to reach universality in order to be fully effective. It is therefore essential that all UN member states become parties to it, comply with and be held accountable to the provisions of the CWC. This is even more urgent as we are currently confronted with new threats and must collectively address the emerging challenges, including chemical terrorism, illicit trafficking of chemical weapons and the misuse of chemicals.

We encourage the Secretariat to continue engaging with States not yet party to the Convention, urging their involvement in the collective efforts towards international peace and security. We can also consider the Director-General's proposal put forth during the Ambassadorial Retreat to establish the prohibition of chemical weapons as a universal norm applicable to all states. This would entail achieving universal adherence to CWC and advancing the norm against the use of chemical weapons more broadly.

Mr Chairperson,

International cooperation and assistance is a central pillar of the Convention on Chemical Weapons (CWC) serving as both a tool and an objective to ensure the full and effective implementation of CWC.

Articles VII, X and XI of the CWC are the key domains of ICA and the programs and the tools developed within remain relevant. ICA has optimally functioned especially on article X while additional efforts are required to overcome the challenges encountered on Article XI related to economic and technological development especially for developing countries. This could be reached through inter alia, encouraging exchange of scientific and technical information, of chemicals and equipment for purposes not prohibited by the Convention and the

promotion of scientific research and projects of development in the field of peaceful chemistry.

My delegation commends Africa program which stands out as a good practice of ICA made possible through regular budget allocations and voluntary contributions and advocates for its complete financing through the ordinary budget in order to ensure its sustainability and predictability. Africa Program can serve as a pathway for South-South cooperation just like regional centers of excellence for assistance and protection against Chemical weapon and OPCW designated laboratories. It is necessary for Africa to host Centers of excellence including in North Africa and Sahel sub-region which has to cope with chemical terrorism. It is also necessary for africa laboratories to join OPCW designated lab network.

Chemical terrorism and the misuse of chemicals by non-state actors are indeed significant concern that require thorough attention within the framework of OPCW which we believe has the potential to play a crucial role in enhancing capabilities of State Parties to combat chemical terrorism by utilizing existing tools and developing new ones as necessary. We welcome the inputs and the recommendations reflected in the draft President's text on this matter.

Mr Chairperson,

In addition to CWC State Parties, we do believe international organizations, industries, research centres, academia and NGOs can also play a role and be our partners in the promotion of the implementation of the CWC provisions through cooperation and awareness raising and outreach.

Considering the new threats and challenges we may face in the future, it is highly necessary to strengthen cooperation with UN bodies and institutions and specialized Organizations in areas related to OPCW's scope, such as disarmament, international security, border control and chemical industry including African Union, its regional bodies, and thematic organs such as Afripol and the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT).

Mr Chairperson,

Effective resource management is critical for the successful implementation of CWC. It is essential for our Organisation to prioritize the rational and efficient utilization of its financial, human and technological resources. In light of the importance of technology and innovation, we must actively promote research and development of innovative technologies that can contribute to fulfilling the objectives of CWC. Additionally, technology should be leveraged as a tool for disseminating information, expanding our audience, and ensuring widespread awareness of OPCW values, objectives, and missions.

The OPCW's success is attributed to its large and diverse membership. It is essential to reflect this diversity in the composition of the Technical Secretariat (TS). By ensuring a TS with a diverse composition, we foster a sense of ownership among States Parties while optimizing the scope and effectiveness of international cooperation and assistance. It is crucial to recognize that there is no conflict

between competence and the equitable geographic representation. It is rather necessary to recognize that diversity is likely to enhance the capabilities of State Parties. Actually the TS acts as a platform for harmonizing skills and expertise, and the investment in national staff members who serve in OPCW pays dividends as they bring back their newfound knowledge and expertise to their own countries or continue serving in international organizations.

In what regards the tenure policy, we acknowledge the need to preserve institutional memory. While underlining the importance of flexibility in the tenure policy, we trust that the Director-General will exercise sound judgment in utilizing this flexibility to allow for alternation and geographical diversity within the organization.

Mr Chairperson,

Algeria has always supported the Convention to achieve its goals through an active contribution in the work of OPCW Policy Making Organs. A significant work has been done also, to ensure the full implementation of the Convention at the national level with the involvement of the relevant departments and stakeholders.

We are looking forward to a consensus outcome of the Rev Conf to strengthen and direct our efforts in the five coming years. My delegation has actively engaged in the Rev Conf preparatory process by presenting a national position on the various themes to be reviewed and interacting positively and constructively within the working group on the TS presentations and on the different versions of the President's Draft text.

I call, in that sense, all parties to prevail compromise in dealing with the few remaining items under discussion. This will give a very positive signal to the future of our Organization and its role in showing the lead in the disarmament architecture. We do believe that we need, now more than ever, to preserve the spirit of consensus and cooperation that has characterized OPCW work since its creation in order to move forward and to overcome the new threats.

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

Thank you.