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SPAIN

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN TO THE OPCW AT THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Mr Chairperson,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues:

Spain aligns itself with the statement by the European Union.

Please allow me to first congratulate the Chairperson of this Fifth Review Conference on his designation. We assure him of our full support for his work. Likewise, we express our gratitude for the essential role played by H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing to manage the complex work of the Open-Ended Working Group for this Conference, which has made it possible to develop a solid basis for the draft provisional text.

Spain once again expresses its deep gratitude for the leadership of the Director-General H.E. Mr Fernando Arias, and reiterates its full confidence in the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW and its professionalism, impartiality, and technical experience to ensure the implementation of the Convention. One clear example of this is the recently opened Centre for Chemistry and Technology, as a cardinal element of the Organisation to improve its capacity to take action, and bring to fruition fundamental work in verification, inspection, training, and capacity building.

Spain strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Air Forces, as has been unequivocally confirmed by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). Spain reiterates its support for the Technical Secretariat as it faces intentional, unfounded attacks against its integrity and credibility. The Syrian Arab Republic must comply with its international obligations and fully cooperate with the OPCW. We will continue to work to guarantee that the perpetrators of these atrocious crimes are held accountable.

The unjustified aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine undermines the basic principles of the United Nations and impacts global peace and security. Spain again urges the Russian Federation to comply with international law, specifically with the Chemical Weapons Convention, and thereby clarify outstanding matters relating to the novichok programme and the poisoning of Alexei Navalny.



Likewise, we must strengthen the mechanisms for verification and implementation in order to guarantee compliance with the Convention, including, among other things, on-site inspections, reinforcing the capacities of the OPCW to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons, the provision of technical assistance to States Parties, and the sufficiency of resources for carrying out its mandate, thus ensuring its financial sustainability in the long term.

For all this, it is key to develop a network of designated laboratories distributed across different continents. The OPCW should continue to work in close collaboration with other international organisations to effectively address global challenges related to chemical weapons. Likewise, it should be capable of tackling challenges posed by the rotation and permanence of personnel and knowledge management.

Spain will continue to support capacity-building efforts in various regions, including in Latin America and Africa, as it firmly believes that they are key to ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention and contribute to strengthening international security within a globalised context and the broad international trade of chemical products.

It is thus fundamental that all States Parties maintain a proactive stance when it comes to defending gender equality and geographic diversity. For this reason we welcome the commitment of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat to these issues. Multilingualism is also a priority for Spain: linguistic diversity contributes to broader and enhanced visibility of our work.

These and many other priorities will allow the Technical Secretariat to tackle the emerging threats posed by State and non-State actors, and keep abreast of scientific and technological advances that may facilitate the synthesis of new chemicals.

The re-emergence of chemical weapons is, in effect, one of the most urgent threats to international peace and security, and must be tackled at the international level. Spain urges all States Parties to enhance national civil protection and response teams and to defend the global standard against the use of chemical weapons.

I would end by reiterating Spain's strongest possible commitment to the cause of eradicating chemical weapons. During this Fifth Review Conference, we have the opportunity to continue the efforts aimed at adopting new necessary measures for the implementation of the Convention.

My delegation kindly requests that this statement be considered an official document of this Conference and published on the Organisation's servers and website.

Thank you.

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