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## PERU

### **STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARISOL AGÜERO COLUNGA PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU 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 Director-General,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to begin my statement by congratulating H.E. Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast of the Netherlands on his designation as Chairperson of the Fifth Review Conference. We express Peru's commitment to supporting him as he carries out his lofty responsibilities. Likewise, we thank H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia for his leadership and distinguished work as Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, which produced the provisional document presented to this Conference.

We also welcome H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela of the Republic of South Africa for his management of the preparatory meetings ahead of the Fifth Review Conference in his capacity as Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the regional group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and would state the following in our national capacity.

The Fifth Review Conference constitutes a valuable opportunity for the States Parties to analyse how the Convention has been implemented over the last five years, to reflect, and to establish clear strategies for the future of the Convention.

The imminent destruction of declared chemical stockpiles this year carries with it the decline of one of the fundamental activities of the OPCW: verification. While ongoing issues will remain—such as the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China, and sea-dumped chemical weapons—this new scenario should bring us to discuss the reorganisation of the Organisation's priorities, focusing them on greater cooperation and assistance for States Parties in order to prevent the proliferation and re-emergence of chemical weapons, and to strengthen the inspection regime.

Within this context, we believe that the recently inaugurated Centre for Chemistry and Technology will play a crucial role in investigation, continuous training, and capacity building for the benefit of all the States Parties. The Centre should work in coordination with the



Scientific Advisory Board, which constitutes a valuable tool of the OPCW for identifying scientific and technological advances relevant to the Convention.

Peru vehemently condemns the use of chemical weapons and believes it to be the obligation of all States Parties to promote the Convention and comply with its provisions, without excuses and without delay. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Non-Aligned Movement and China, with the exception of the paragraph referring to the cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic with the OPCW. Peru also aligns itself with the joint statement made on the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic delivered by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

We express our profound concern about the conclusions of the third report of the Investigation and Identification Team of the OPCW regarding the use of chemical weapons in Douma in 2018, and we once again reiterate our full support for the work of the Technical Secretariat in the Syrian Arab Republic, especially the Fact-Finding Mission, the Declaration Assessment Team, and the Investigation and Identification Team. We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat and carry out in full all of the commitments undertaken as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Within the framework of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of this Conference, we met more than 20 times to openly discuss the state of the implementation of the Convention and the related challenges presented thereby, as well as what the States Parties expect from the Organisation over the next five years.

The result of these discussions can be found reflected in the provisional text submitted to this Conference, which covers in depth many of the topics previously mentioned. Peru wishes to emphasise in particular that the document considers the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group to address geographic representation at the OPCW. We believe that this is an important first step in having the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat hold a dialogue and identify measures by which the Organisation's existing geographical imbalance can be overcome.

Peru firmly believes that today's complex current context requires a diverse organisation that is geographically balanced across all levels, for the benefit of efficiency, productivity, innovation, and other points of view that each region contributes in their own way.

Additional measures, such as building a closer relationship with National Authorities and establishing a trust fund for the young professionals and internship and fellowship programmes will promote greater participation among young professionals, especially those from underrepresented regions.

The Fifth Review Conference offers us a unique opportunity to learn from past lessons and assess what we want from our Organisation in the future. We urge all States Parties to work together towards adopting a consensus-supported document that is sufficiently solid and strategic, and that will allow the OPCW to implement the provisions of the Convention in the best possible way in order to achieve the primary mission of the Organisation: a world free of chemical weapons, and ensuring that chemistry is used for peace, progress, and prosperity.

I kindly request that this statement be considered an official document of this session.

Thank you.