

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AT THE 104TH SESSION OF
THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to welcome Your Excellency Ambassador Lucian Fatu back to take over the helm of the 104th Session of the Executive Council and assure you that my delegation will extend its full cooperation and support during the current Session. I would also like to thank the Director-General Fernando Arias for his report delivered at this session.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Mr Chairperson,

The experience of the Fifth Review Conference indicated that the success and progress of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as the first disarmament treaty whose objective is to eliminate forever an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, are contingent upon all States Parties working in an apolitical, transparent, and inclusive manner on the basis of the longstanding tradition of consensus within the framework of the Convention. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the main victim of chemical weapons in contemporary history, encourages the States Parties to avoid any politicisation of the Organisation and put further efforts to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention, in all its aspects.

The destruction of US chemical weapons has moved us closer to our goal of having a world free of chemical weapons. It should have been done 16 years ago, namely 10 years after the convention entered into force. However, As long as undeclared chemical weapons stockpiles of non-parties to the Convention remain, the goal cannot be achieved.

It is now the time for the Organization to more focus on the universality of the Convention and use all available tools to compel non-parties, particularly those which possess chemical weapons, to accede to the convention without further delay or precondition.

Mr Chairperson,

It is assured by the Convention that States Parties' economic and technological development for peaceful purposes will not be hampered by implementing its obligations. Despite the accomplishments of the Organization in various areas, we

should not lose sight of the fact that other pillars, especially articles X and XI, have yet to be fully implemented. Failure to fulfil this assurance by not removing impediments to the economic and technological development of States Parties would irreparably impair the integrity of the Convention. The Organization should put the promotion of trade and international cooperation in the peaceful application of chemistry on top of its agenda.

My delegation strongly rejects discriminatory restrictions, particularly the imposition of unilateral sanctions against the Member States of this Organisation. It is noteworthy that tens of thousands of victims of chemical weapons in Iran are now under unlawful and inhumane unilateral sanctions, while they are in urgent need of special medication and treatment.

Mr Chairperson,

On the issues related to the Syrian Arab Republic, Iran consistently supports the continuation of the cooperation between Syria and the OPCW within a mutually agreed framework of collaboration. In this connection, we welcome the continuation of the high-level meetings between the Syrian authorities and the OPCW. My delegation also welcomes the recent positive development regarding the Syrian Arab Republic's flexibility and cooperation that enables the Technical Secretariat to deploy the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) fully. We hope this flexibility is considered and received by the Technical Secretariat positively.

The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that cooperation and dialogue have proven to be the best mechanism to resolve remaining technical issues. The technical issues need to be resolved through cooperation and dialogue, and by avoiding political pressure, which has proven time and again to be a failed strategy that would jeopardise the whole process.

In the context of chemical terrorism, it has rightly been affirmed that the OPCW is not an anti-terrorism Organization. At the same time, for an international organization that exists to promote security, the contemporary threat of terrorism creates a distinct responsibility. Due to the OPCW's technical and specialized nature, Implementation of the Convention, particularly articles VII, X and XI, in a full, effective and non-discriminatory manner, is the tool which the OPCW can contribute to the global anti-terrorism efforts.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology will be an asset to the Technical Secretariat in fulfilling its well-defined mandate in accordance with the Convention, as well as enhancing international cooperation and assistance among States Parties, to ensure the full,

effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention. To this end, we firmly believe that the advantage of the Centre, including its services and capacity-building programs in the field of research, analysis and training should only be provided to States Parties. Extending such benefits to non-parties will adversely deprive the Organisation of incentives to encourage them to adhere to the convention.

My delegation expresses its dissatisfaction that once again the draft program and budget of the Organisation for 2024-2025 have been provided in an omnibus format. Furthermore, the cash surplus shall be allocated among the States Parties in accordance with the financial regulation of the Organisation (Rule 6.3). This trend creates a negative precedent for the future of the Organisation.

In conclusion, I wish to inform you that the Islamic Republic of Iran in collaboration with the Technical Secretariat will host the 11th "International Course on Medical Aspects of Assistance and Protection against Chemical Weapons" in Tehran, this week. The purpose of the Course is to provide medical professionals from States Parties with the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills regarding medical treatment for victims of chemical weapons as well as chemical incidents.

I request that this statement be posted as an official document of this session on the OPCW catalyst and public website.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.