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MEXICO

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JORGE LOMÓNACO,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO, AT THE
FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

I wish to express my sincere congratulations on your election as Chairperson of this Fourteenth Conference of the States Parties and assure you both my full support and personal collaboration, and those of my delegation. I am sure that your experience and diplomatic skills will lead us to a successful conclusion of this Conference. At the same time, I wish to take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Minoru Shibuya, Permanent Representative of Japan to the OPCW, for his able conduct of the Thirteenth Conference of the States Parties.

Mr Chairperson,

This is the last Conference of the States Parties for our dear Director-General, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter. Mexico wants to take this opportunity to pay tribute to his leadership. Ambassador Pfirter has led the Organisation for the past seven years, more than half the time since the establishment of the Organisation twelve years ago. He has worked strenuously, together with his team, to run very efficiently and effectively the Organisation in its administrative, financial, and technical aspects, making it a success story in the multilateral scene.

One of the most important results of such a skillful management has been that, for the past four years, the Organisation has been able to operate with a zero nominal growth budget without compromising either the efficiency of the Organisation or the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mexico rests assured that in the remaining months of his tenure, Ambassador Pfirter will make use of all of his fine diplomatic skills and his extensive multilateral experience as he has done throughout his outstanding career. Consequently, we offer the permanent support of Mexico to Rogelio Pfirter.

Mr Chairperson,

We should begin our deliberations today with the earned satisfaction of having been able to finalise our work in the Executive Council, in preparation for this Conference, in time and in



very good spirits, including the decision to recommend by consensus to this august body the appointment of Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü as the next Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

During the process for this appointment, many delegations stated the importance of consensus and their commitment to select the best candidate. These are indeed highly desirable objectives but more often than not, limited to the rhetoric and, in similar circumstances, rarely acted upon. Except that, in this case, we did it. In the end, we made no distinction whether a candidate came from one region or another, stayed away from groupings, and avoided a feared North-South confrontation, so divisive and damaging that has managed to steer other organisations away from their core objectives.

But let us be fair, this outcome is not the merit of anyone in particular, but the result of the collective effort of members and non-members of the Executive Council, as well as of delegations, their respective capitals, and the candidates themselves, all of which chose to put the interests of the Organisation before their personal or national expectations.

We should all be proud of our level of cooperation and our ability to work as a team, which is rarely seen in other international organisations. In dealing with the many, complex subjects before us, we had worked very hard, hand in hand, against all odds, and managed to overcome our differences by means of our traditional way of doing business in OPCW, even in complicated situations: consensus. We stuck to it and we all won.

So today, in keeping alive such sense of belonging, commitment, and shared responsibility, our Organisation is stronger than ever and in better shape to face the very difficult challenges that lay ahead.

Mr Chairperson,

During the past century Mexico has vigorously promoted and been committed to multilateral negotiations as a mean to foster international peace and security. The 21st century is not different. Weapons of mass destruction still exist, and the threat of their use remains until the international community gets rid of this scourge and of the possibility of developing and producing them.

Let us not forget that the international community spent many years negotiating this Convention. Each and every paragraph of the Convention was a product of painstaking negotiations that sometimes required finding a fine balance among extreme positions or was an outcome of subtle political commitments. As a result of this hard work, the Convention finally entered into force almost thirteen years ago, establishing a unique and successful verification system implemented by the OPCW.

However, we are less than two and a half years away from the extended final deadline for the complete and verifiable destruction of all chemical weapons by possessor States Parties under the provisions of the Convention. We know, by now, that this may not happen. One State Party has already informed the Executive Council that it may not be able to conclude the destruction of all its chemical weapons on time, and there are signs that indicate that there might be another. For Mexico, this is a cause of serious concern as it attaches to destruction the outmost importance. Therefore, Mexico encourages all States Parties to engage in an open and transparent dialogue to deal with such a possibility. It should be a dialogue which

must avoid politicising the discussion because, in Mexico's view, the paramount consideration is to safeguard the integrity of the Convention. This upcoming debate should thus strengthen, not debilitate the Convention.

Thank you.

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