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PAKISTAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AIZAZ AHMAD CHAUDHRY
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN TO THE OPCW
AT THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

1. Let me begin by commending you for the excellent manner in which you have led the work of the Executive Council over the last year and helped achieve substantial progress on many important issues. We also commend the Director-General and his able team for their outstanding work and arrangements made for this session.
2. My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Cuba on behalf of the NAM CWC States Parties and China.
3. Having delivered comprehensive statements both at the Sixty-Third Session of the Executive Council and the Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, this time we will limit our remarks to only some important issues.
4. But, let me begin with a few remarks about a visit to the United States chemical weapons destruction facilities in Pueblo and Tooele that took place in February/March this year. I had the privilege to join the delegation as a nominee of the Asian Group. We witnessed that the destruction process was being conducted with high regard to safety and environmental standards. We also noted the full commitment of the U.S. Government to achieving total destruction of its stockpile. The visit indeed enabled us to better understand the peculiar circumstances that had caused the delay in the total destruction of U.S. chemical weapons stockpile. On return I presented my report to the Asian Group. The Ambassadors of India and Japan and the Deputy Permanent Representative of China also shared their observations. We thank the U.S. Government for facilitating this highly useful visit.
5. We are all well aware now that the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of chemical weapons will in all likelihood not be met by the two major possessor States. This is a cause of concern not because of any doubt about the commitment of possessor States, who have made substantial progress in destroying their chemical weapons stockpiles. We are confident that they have every intention to complete the destruction of their stockpiles. I was personally witness to the efforts being made during the recent visit to two U.S. CWDFs. Our concern is essentially due to the fact that the possible non-compliance with a fundamental treaty obligation may undermine the integrity and credibility of the Convention.



6. Furthermore, in a world undergoing rapid and complex political, social and security changes, the lingering existence of chemical weapons well beyond 2012 will mean that the risk of chemical weapons will remain part of the security calculus of the military strategists. Until the total destruction of all categories of chemical weapons has been attained, the security and disarmament objectives of the Convention cannot be fully achieved. This situation places additional responsibility both on the OPCW and the concerned States. The OPCW needs to retain its capabilities and capacities and not become complacent about the destruction process; a full-scale change of Organisation's priorities till the disarmament objective is achieved is not warranted. The possessor and abandoning States need to undertake all measures available at their disposal to accelerate their efforts to achieve complete destruction in a time bound manner.
7. While we would all wish to see the relevant possessor States meet the final extended deadline of 2012, at the same time we have to prepare ourselves to meet the legal and other implications of the unpleasant eventuality of deadlines not being met. The ongoing consultations that have been skilfully led by yourself and your predecessor Ambassador Lomónaco of Mexico, have achieved valuable progress in identifying a wide array of elements which will be part of the final outcome of the States Parties' formal deliberations.
8. For our part, we have been participating in these consultations in a positive spirit and made constructive substantive proposals. For us the objective of the exercise is to find a solution that will bolster and not undermine the integrity and credibility of the Convention. We think that the ongoing consultations are moving in the right direction. While we have developed some good confidence-building measures that cover political aspects, an equal effort needs to be made to address the legal aspects/concerns according to the provisions of the Convention. We think that a necessary element of the legal measures would be to take cognizance of the situation in legal terms. We also believe that the Executive Council should take up formal discussion of the issue of deadlines in this and/or the forthcoming sessions with a view to finalising its recommendations for the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties under Article VIII, paragraph 36 of the Convention.
9. Notwithstanding the legal impossibility of extending the deadline beyond 2012 or setting up a new deadline, the Convention provisions (Article VIII, paragraph 36) do provide sufficient legal space to specify a time frame for redressal of a situation of non-compliance. We, therefore, feel that a time frame for destruction beyond 2012 will be an essential element of the eventual solution. Similarly, we also support the proposal to have a review mechanism to evaluate and review the progress of destruction operations down the line after 2012. Apart from taking into consideration the above principles, we expect the consultative process to be inclusive, transparent and based on consensus.
10. Before concluding, let me reaffirm here that my delegation's primary consideration in this important issue is the desire to preserve the credibility of the Convention.
11. I conclude by assuring the Council of the full cooperation of our delegation. I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the OPCW.