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**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR KAZEM GHARIB ABADI  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE OPCW  
AT THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

Given that this is the last session of the Executive Council you will be chairing, while appreciating all the efforts you have put in over the last year, I am inclined to hereby assure you, the distinguished Director-General of the Organisation, as well as all the representations to the OPCW, that my delegation will spare no efforts to promote and preserve the credibility and integrity of the Convention, and that in order for this objective to realise, you have my firm assurance of close cooperation.

My delegation also wishes to fully associate itself with the policy statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cuba on behalf of the NAM CWC States Parties and China.

The Organisation is in a critical situation. The coming six months that lead to the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties are absolutely crucial and that any decision adopted by the policy-making organs in relation to the challenges confronting the Organisation and its future is linked to the fate of this Organisation and the Convention, which can either guarantee its survival or discredit it. Let us not lose sight of the fact that our decisions are exposed to the judgment of the international community.

All the States Parties, having acceded to the Convention, have committed themselves not to research, develop, produce, stockpile or use chemical weapons. The possessor States Parties, too, have obligated themselves to destroying all their chemical weapons stockpiles at the latest, fifteen years after entry into force of the Convention. Which accounts for why the Chemical Weapons Convention is the most comprehensive model of an international convention particularly in the field of disarmament and arms control. The primary objective of the Convention is destruction of chemical weapons in a definite timeline thereby rendering the world free of chemical weapons, which in and of itself shall promote international peace and security. This Convention does not grant exclusive rights to some handpicked States Parties. Therefore, all Member States enjoy equal rights.



The continued existence of even one chemical bomb will compromise the international peace and security and the nightmare of employment of such destructive and lethal weapons will be perpetuated. The world has not yet forgotten the tragic events that were a consequence of deployment of chemical weapons against the innocent people of Iran by the former government of Iraq. It bears mentioning that these chemical weapons had been provided to the despotic regime of Saddam by some developed countries. In Iran more than 13,000 people have lost their lives to these lethal weapons. Furthermore, over 100,000 people are suffering from acute health problems. Not a single day ever passes by without some of these chemically wounded people dying as martyrs because of the wounds inflicted on them.

Our opposition to the existence of chemical weapons as well as our emphasis on the need for paying tribute to the Convention and destruction of these weapons within the agreed-upon timeline has been a principled opposition whose legal dimensions have origin in the provisions of the Convention and the humane and humanitarian dimensions have origin in the tragic consequences of deployment of these weapons against the innocent people.

We would like to hereby call upon the United States of America and the Russian Federation to faithfully fulfil their obligations under the Convention and destroy all their weapons within the final extended deadline, otherwise, these countries will be considered as non-compliant and that the Convention is quite transparent on how to deal with a case of non-compliance.

About fourteen months have elapsed since the informal consultations commenced. Now the time is ripe to carefully assess and gauge the progress and effectiveness with which these issues have been dealt with. While the Convention provisions should have been the lodestar of consultations, all the efforts, as we witness, were focused on advocating a political approach lying outside the purview of the Convention. Owing to the principled positions of some delegations for whom the integrity and credibility of the Convention is important, only in the last two rounds of informal consultation some interest has been displayed in considering certain legal aspects of the issue. My delegation is of the view that such positive indications can be indicative of gravitating toward legal aspects of destruction. Perhaps with reliance on the provisions of the Convention, we may be able to reach a consensus on ways of dealing with a case of non-compliance. It is necessary that I emphasise this point that although destruction of a considerable quantity of the chemical weapons is a significant step, failure to totally destroy chemical weapons is in blatant contradiction with the obligations of the possessor States Parties, which is equivalent to non-compliance. That it is said only a few percentages of chemical weapons remain and the possessor States Parties are well-intentioned in implementing their obligations and we should, therefore, take it lightly, and forget about recognising non-compliance, is not acceptable.

The possessor States Parties should be held accountable for their non-compliance and that we call upon them to implement the Convention and they should be extremely cooperative in this regard. Political approaches cannot be responsive to this end. We are of the view that it is time for the destruction discussions to officially get under way in the Executive Council sessions. My delegation expresses its support for inclusion of an item in the agenda of the Sixty-Fifth Session of the Executive Council to discuss the issue formally in accordance with paragraph 36 of Article VIII.

As it was pointed out, the Chemical Weapons Convention is the only international disarmament convention. Unfortunately, there are already efforts under way to shift the mandate of the mission of this Organisation from disarmament to non-proliferation. Any

measure to this effect is unacceptable to my delegation. Needless to stress that when we speak of non-proliferation, in effect, we acknowledge the existence of chemical weapons for some States Parties whereas according to the Convention all the weapons should be destroyed within the final extended deadline. Do some quarters really believe that they intend to divide the members of this Convention like other comparable treaties into the haves and have-nots. That after 29 April 2012 the focus of the mission of the Organisation shall be shifted from disarmament to non-proliferation, which is a great mistake and a major diversion. Firstly, some of the weapons shall remain in existence and that efforts aimed at the realisation of a world free of chemical weapons shall continue. Secondly, the term non-proliferation is a forged word and shall call the credibility and integrity of the Convention into question. The delegation of my country explicitly requests that no extraneous term be ever used in all the official documents of the Organisation, correspondence and the website of the Technical Secretariat. Non-production of chemical weapons and oversight of the Organisation in order to make sure that the above objective is realised is a case that is acceptable. However, this point does not pave the way for the mission to be diverted. Use of such forged terms are indicative of the creation of the same unequal treaties, namely, division of countries into the haves and have-nots and imposition of illegal export controls regimes on the pretext of confrontation with non-proliferation.

In the same vein, the issue that should be adequately heeded to is holding of a seminar entitled "Seminar on the OPCW's Contribution to Security and the Non-Proliferation of Chemical Weapons" which happened on 11 and 12 April 2011 at the Headquarters of the Organisation. Looking into the issue indicates that this seminar is part of the strategy adopted by the European Union in 2007. The finance for this seminar has also been provided for by this Union. My delegation wonders how the Secretariat has used all of its human and spiritual capacities for holding such a seminar. We hereby request the Director-General to inform us of the level at which the Organisation participated in this seminar and what capacity and resources it exhausted to this effect.

We are concerned not only about the future of the Organisation but also about diversion from its core objectives. When this Organisation embarks upon activities, measures and anti-terrorist initiatives without the knowledge of the States Parties, it turns this body into a dependent and anti-terrorist agency. In this context, our principled positions are quite transparent and telling. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is a completely independent disarmament body and that its non-proliferation and anti-terrorism efforts have been imposed on it by an extraneous system, have no status. Unfortunately, the volume of such activities within the Organisation has increased and given the related budget limit, the way finance is provided for, is questionable. Seemingly, the European Union has been so generous that in order to realise its objectives and implement its strategy it has concluded agreements according to which it extends EUR 7 million in aid. If this is so, looking into the legal base of the conclusion of such agreements that result in diversion from the core objectives of the Convention is quite essential.

The other issue to which we must pay heed is the situation of destruction of chemical weapons in Libya. There are two sources of concern in this connection. First, there is the possibility of serious damage to the facilities of chemical weapons in the present situation. Second, barring entry of destruction equipment into Libya. We call upon all the parties involved to discharge their responsibilities for protecting the security of weapons and destruction facilities and that they should pave the ground for the arrival of destruction

equipment in Libya. We also call on Libya to fulfil its obligations to destroy all chemical to destroy all chemical weapons in legal due course.

Regarding discussions on the future of the OPCW, we believe that any decision related to the programmes, policies and the future of the Organisation and also the future priorities lies in the hands of the States Parties. It should be emphasised that destruction of chemical weapons should be accorded top priority in discussions on the future of the Organisation. Issues such as the size of the Organisation, and ways to assist chemical weapons victims, and concrete solutions to remove obstacles and restrictions imposed on exchange of chemical materials and equipment for peaceful purposes, require serious attention.

The other issue on the agenda of this session of the Executive Council is implementation of Article X. Full implementation of this article as well as focus of our attention on it constitutes part of our responsibility and obligations to the victims of chemical weapons. As you are aware, the Islamic Republic of Iran fell victim to the chemical weapons provided to the Saddam regime by some countries. There are also other victims of the chemical weapons such as those of Halabcha. The Islamic Republic of Iran during the Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties proposed formation of a support network for the victims of chemical weapons, which was welcomed by the States Parties. As yet two rounds of informal consultations have been held and that I deem it necessary to appreciate the efforts of the facilitator of Article X and also express our appreciation for the paper provided to this effect by the Office of Legal Adviser. We are of the conviction that establishment of such a network is the least that the States Parties and the Organisation can do in order to display their sympathy for the victims of chemical weapons. This issue is not exclusively related to one country only and that at least several other countries have offered victims in this regard. Article X of the Convention constitutes the legal base for setting up of such a network. The message that such an initiative conveys is very positive. We are confident in the knowledge that if we embark on a collective effort, this proposal will be developed in such a manner that it will be presented to the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties for approval.

My delegation hereby expresses its appreciation for the efforts of the Secretariat for organising the workshop on Article XI and that our thanks also go to the facilitator of this article. Unfortunately, the significance of this article has been ignored. Fourteen years after entry into force of the Convention, no consistent and efficient measures for the implementation of this article have been taken. Imposition of illegal and unjustifiable restrictions on the exchange of equipment and chemical technologies are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. Unfortunately, at a time when some non-parties have had easy access to scheduled chemicals, some States Parties that have been quite compliant to their obligations have been subject to restrictions and denials. It is high time that an action plan was developed for Article XI. My delegation shall closely cooperate with other delegations in this regard.

In concluding, may I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Sixty-Fourth Session of the Executive Council.