



OPCW

Executive Council

Sixty-Fourth Session
3 – 6 May 2011

EC-64/NAT.12
3 May 2011
ENGLISH only

KENYA

**STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR RUTHIE C. RONO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KENYA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

May I take this opportunity on behalf of my delegation to congratulate you on the way you are conducting the deliberations of the Sixty-Fourth Session of the Executive Council. I am convinced that your superb leadership and performance in the past will also be witnessed during this session. May I assure you of the support and cooperation of my delegation.

My delegation also congratulates the Director-General for his efficient and qualitative management of the Secretariat. The Director-General since taking over the helm of the OPCW has continued to ensure that we are availed working documents in ample time.

May I also seize this opportunity to congratulate and warmly welcome Ambassador Grace Asirwatham who is attending the Executive Council for the first time in her capacity as the Deputy Director-General of our Organisation. We have every confidence that she will have a positive impact on the Organisation.

May I also take this opportunity to commiserate with the people of Japan following the devastation of the earthquake which was compounded by the tsunami and that led to unforetold human and property loss. As they recover, Kenya will always be on their side and I believe that all the Member States of our Organisation share the same view.

The Kenya delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa, H.E. Mr Peter Goosen.

My delegation has taken note of the opening statement of the Director-General on the activities of the Organisation as well as reports by the Vice-Chairpersons of the Council and the facilitators. We also take note of the presentations and reports that have been made in regard to the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpiles and of the abandoned chemical weapons.

There is a continuous volatility and heightened political tensions in some regions of the world and particularly in North Africa and the Middle East. With the escalation of violence, it will be catastrophic should chemical weapons be part of the armoury used in the war theatres.



The situation in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is worrisome considering that the country may not be in a conducive state to effect the destruction process it has put in place. My delegation in this respect would like to call on the Member States of our Organisation to come up with preferred solutions towards addressing the destruction of chemical weapons in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The issue of fundamental importance confronting the OPCW at this point in time is how to achieve complete destruction of all categories of existing chemical weapons by the extended deadline of April 2012. Though the major possessor States have made considerable progress in destroying their declared chemical weapons stockpiles, it is a matter of concern that at their current pace of destruction they are not likely to comply with the extended deadline which is a fundamental obligation of the Convention. The destruction of abandoned chemical weapons, though under way, also appears likely to miss the final extended deadline. Whereas we have every confidence in their commitment to the Convention regime, it is important for the concerned States to hasten their destruction operations at the existing facilities as well as to expeditiously incorporate new destruction facilities to meet the deadline.

As the possibility of non-compliance with the destruction deadline appears more evident, the ongoing consultations on this issue under your able leadership will need to come up with a solution that preserves the credibility, integrity and the legal framework of the Convention. To this end, my delegation supports the ongoing discussions on the existing and new verification measures for the post-2012 situation as a way of building confidence. It is also essential that we address the legal and administrative issues associated with possible non-compliance with the deadlines, which will have a direct bearing on the integrity, credibility and future direction of the Convention.

It is my delegation's view that besides the destruction of all chemical weapons stockpiles remaining our top priority until this objective is achieved, the other important objectives of priority to OPCW should be to ensure our collective security and capacity against resurgence of chemical weapons, the promotion of safe use of chemistry through exchange of scientific/technical skills and knowledge, exchange of chemicals, equipment as well as promotion of assistance and protection against chemical weapons attack.

My delegation attaches a lot of importance on the implementation of Article X on "assistance and protection against chemical weapons". Towards this, it's of paramount importance to ensure practical capacity building as well as the transfer of material and appropriate equipment in order to stem chemical incidents on a regional and subregional basis. The movement of chemicals across borders in Africa and the pirate-prone Indian Ocean waters calls for a responsive and equipped organisation that is able to handle wide and complex chemical incidents.

In this regard, my delegation wishes to underscore the importance of international cooperation within the context of the Convention in preventing terrorists from acquiring and/or using chemical weapons. Collaboration in this respect between the OPCW, States Parties and regional centres for counter-terrorism such as the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algiers, Algeria, is encouraged. The Centre in Algiers should be fully equipped with the latest requisite materials so that it becomes a centre of excellence in addressing the terrorism menace.

Equally, training of customs personnel manning seaports in the Indian Ocean along the East coast of Africa down to South Africa should be continuously done so that they can be able to apprehend undesirable prohibited chemical materials entering into these territories.

The issue of the composition of the staff of the OPCW Technical Secretariat remains a concern that has to be addressed in order to ensure equitable geographical and gender representation through a transparent recruitment process. I am confident that the Director-General with his competent team is able to take up this concern.

Regarding the tenure policy, my delegation supports the ongoing work and looks forward to an agreeable tenure policy that takes into consideration the budgetary reality and the retention of highly experienced personnel in the interest of the Organisation beyond 29 April 2012.

Finally, let me once again thank you for your leadership at the Sixty-Fourth Session of the Executive Council. This being the end of your tenure as Chair, I would like to wish you the best of luck in any other assignment that you may be bestowed by the various organs of our Organisation.

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

I thank you!

--- 0 ---