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THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellency, the Director-General of the Organisation,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to welcome and congratulate H.E. Ambassador Olexandr Horin of Ukraine on chairing the Seventy-Fourth Session of the Executive Council. We are confident that your expertise and wisdom will contribute to the success of the work of our Council. I wish also to welcome the Vice-Chairpersons who are taking part with us in this Session, as well as the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü, and the Deputy Director-General, H.E. Grace Asirwatham. I wish also to welcome the new permanent representatives, hoping that their presence will enrich OPCW meetings. I wish to affirm the support of my delegation to the statement made by H.E. Ambassador Kazem Gharib Abadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

While we laud the intensive efforts made by the United States and the Russian Federation and their representatives to the OPCW, as well as those made by the OPCW, its Director-General and the States Parties, in order to reach a solution to the chemical weapons crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, we also affirm our support for the decisions of the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Executive Council, which constitute a major step to defuse tension and military escalation, and increase chances for a political solution. In this context, we welcome the accession by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Chemical Weapons Convention, which will enter into force for it on 14 October. It will then become the 190th Member State of the OPCW. We call upon the Syrian Government to fully abide by the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in order to spare Syria, its people and the region further devastation, and to support the political solution that we all want to achieve. I also wish to announce that my government is ready to provide technical assistance to dispose of the chemical weapons stockpile of the Syrian Arab Republic, in line with paragraph 3(a) of the decision taken by the Executive Council at its Thirty-Third Session, on 27 September, regarding the funding mechanisms and voluntary contributions for activities, and in implementation of this decision.

The Government of my country has expressed its outrage at the use of chemical weapons, regardless of the party that may have used them and the circumstances of such use, and affirmed that the perpetrators of this crime must be held accountable.



The destruction of Syrian chemical weapons is a historic decision of the Organisation, which demonstrated to the entire world that it is possible to find peaceful solutions, and constitutes a step forward to rid the world of all weapons of mass destruction. Thus, my delegation supports all activities undertaken by the OPCW, which is one of the major pillars providing the international community with a genuine guarantee for international peace and security. We also resolutely support OPCW efforts for achieving the universality of the Convention and establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle-East, through complete and comprehensive destruction of chemical weapons in the region. This will require sustained momentum and consensus.

On 26 September 2013, the Iraqi delegate to the United Nations deposited the instrument of accession of Iraq to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Thus, Iraq became the 161st Party to this treaty. Iraq's accession to the CTBT is an indication of its credibility and evidence to its willingness to work with the international system towards achieving the objectives of disarmament, non-proliferation and preservation of international peace and security. Iraq has acceded to most of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, and has been active in the relevant negotiations. Iraq had also the honour to chair the Disarmament Conference from 24 June to 18 August 2013. In this context, I would like to highlight that the new Iraq is striving to become a factor for peace and stability in the region, and to meet its obligations in this context, based on the Iraqi Constitution and the relevant international conventions. At the same time, we reaffirm the rights of States, especially developing ones, to acquire, use and develop technology for peaceful purposes and to achieve economic growth with no discrimination or restrictions.

Iraq shares the international community's concern regarding chemical terrorism, i.e. that it is one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. We need to work together, through stringent security measures, to prevent terrorist and unauthorised parties from possessing chemical weapons and related chemicals. Iraq is committed to the provisions of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 of 2004, which affirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitute a threat to international peace and security.

Concerning the destruction plan, the relevant Iraqi authorities have achieved major progress, and we hope to submit soon the comprehensive destruction plan. During this Session of the Council, the Director-General of the National Monitoring Authority will review the progress made in this regard, which reflects the seriousness of the Iraqi Government in accelerating the destruction of remnants from the former programme.

In conclusion, I wish that this statement be adopted as one of the official documents of the Seventy-Fourth Session of the Executive Council.

I thank you