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CHILE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE
SEVENTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I am pleased to once more voice our appreciation for the work that this Council is doing under your leadership and I reiterate our willingness to collaborate on your work.

We thank the Director-General for the report that he has presented on the status of the Organisation and regarding the initiatives that are under way. Similarly, we also thank the Vice-Chairpersons for their statements. We would like to express our appreciation for the Deputy Director-General and that she will sincerely be missed after her departure from the Organisation.

On 4 February, this Executive Council adopted a decision on the reports of the Fact-Finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic; my delegation supported it, not only because it contained considerations and conclusions that share, among other things, the strongest possible condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, under any circumstances, but also because we believe that unwavering confidence in the Convention and in this Organisation should be demonstrated.

In light of the seriousness of the reports, the Council must act, and we are grateful that a decision has been reached with the most support possible, conveying a shared vision of the role of this Organisation. As we stated that day, we regret that it was not possible to reach a consensus-based decision on a topic where there are shared concerns. That is how the Security Council addressed it in resolution 2209 (2015). Our country will continue to give preference to a consensus, and as such we encourage continuing to make the efforts to reach a consensus.

We also recognise the intense work done by you, Mr Chairperson, when you sought to attain the best solution for everyone in an effort to achieve a consensus.

On this same topic, we support the continued work of the Fact-Finding Mission to investigate other allegations and we urge all parties to cooperate in the fact-finding investigation within the context in which it was created. In this regard, we support the efforts of the Director-General toward ensuring that it is possible to investigate the allegations reported by the Syrian authorities.



At the same time, we highly value the documents presented by the Technical Secretariat on the future activities of the Fact-Finding Mission, which provide a broad vision of the work that can be done, the time frame for the next phase, and the likely composition of the team of professionals involved in the Mission. In the spirit of cooperation upon which the Organisation is based, and upon which all allegations should be investigated, we await the Syrian Arab Republic's prompt consent for these tasks.

As regards the third report issued by the Declaration Assessment Team, we note the issues that still require clarification and we are confident that the Syrian Arab Republic will continue to collaborate on this matter and clarify any questions regarding the complete elimination of the chemical weapons programme. We will carefully read the documents that will be part of the supplementary declaration, as well as the results of the analyses of the samples collected in said country by the Technical Secretariat's team.

We welcome the advances over recent weeks in the destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities, particularly concerning the underground structures. We also note that some of the facilities slated for destruction are not currently accessible to the destruction team due to the security situation in the surrounding area; this could mean changing the deadlines for the completion of this important process.

As we approach the Centennial Commemoration of the First Large-Scale Use of Chemical Weapons at Ieper and join together in remembrance, we have received with interest a document prepared by the Technical Secretariat and entitled "The OPCW in 2025: Ensuring a World Free of Chemical Weapons", which sets out ways to update the strategic paths of this Organisation, bearing in mind that it will continue to recalibrate its focus from chemical disarmament to a more preventative stance against the resurgence of chemical weapons, among other tasks. This timely contribution by the Technical Secretariat will be enriched by the discussions that the States Parties will be having on this matter, in which this delegation is ready to participate.

Without voicing certain opinions, and concurring with—among other things—the need to maintain a strong verification regimen, the ability to carry out challenge inspections or investigations into alleged use, and provide support for the investigations run by the United Nations, we agree with the need to devote more attention to prevention and the ability to respond to the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, education and outreach, and cooperation with other agencies. In this sense, this would be a predisposition to substantive cooperation with the relevant international organisations in an effort to prepare for an encounter with the hostile use of toxic chemicals.

As an area of special relevance, we would also like to touch upon the promotion of international cooperation for the peaceful use of chemistry. This delegation wishes to work alongside other delegations and the Technical Secretariat in order to continue developing the proposals on practical and specific initiatives which have been raised and which will be raised in the future, and to continue making advances in this area—particularly concerning the exchange of knowledge and technology, aware of the many challenges that this represents and where the participation of the relevant agents is necessary. For this reason, we welcome Myanmar's prompt ratification of the Convention.

As regards the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, we welcome the document presented by the Technical Secretariat referring to applicable law pertaining to prohibited

activities associated with chemical weapons and carried out by said actors. This document, into which a great deal of effort was put, brings a new and interesting perspective to the discussions taking place within the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, and we believe that the OPCW has a role to play in the fight against terrorism involving the use of chemicals within its mandate. The Convention is a relevant tool in this area.

Mr Chairperson, we share the sentiment stated by the delegation of China that the Technical Secretariat should continue its efforts to update the Organisation's website in the different official languages considering the available resources and the universality of the Organisation's work.

We would be most grateful, Mr Chairperson, if this statement could please be considered an official document of this session of the Executive Council and published on the OPCW website.

Thank you.

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