



Statement by
Vijay Kumar Jaiswal,
First Secretary
Permanent Representation of India to the OPCW
at the 79th Session of the Executive Council,
07-10 July 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to welcome you as Chairman of the Executive Council and wish you a successful tenure. We are confident that under your leadership, this session would have a successful conclusion.

I would also like to thank the Director General for his comprehensive statement and to commend him and the Technical Secretariat for the good work being done by them.

We welcome and support the proposal of the Technical Secretariat to establish 29 April each year as "OPCW Day".

My delegation also endorses and associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of NAM States Parties to the CWC and China.

Mr. Chairman,

India views the Chemical Weapons Convention as a unique, non-discriminatory disarmament instrument which serves as a model for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. In a short span of eighteen years, CWC has been remarkably successful in attaining near universality. India attaches great importance to its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation. India's consistent position has been that the use of chemical weapons anywhere and

by anybody cannot be justified. All chemical weapons must be destroyed. Destruction of chemical weapons is the most important undertaking made by every State Party to the Convention. We urge all possessor States to take necessary steps to expedite their destruction processes. We also urge the Technical Secretariat to formulate an Action Plan with monitorable and verifiable targets.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has closely followed the progress made in the destruction of Syria's Chemical Weapons Production Facilities. It is satisfying to note that all the Underground Structures have been destroyed. We expect that the unfinished task of the destruction of Aircraft Hangers would be completed shortly.

My delegation has noted the work done so far by the two Fact-Finding Missions (FFM's) in Syria as briefed by the Technical Secretariat. It is our expectation that the work of the FFM's would be carried out in the spirit of trust and co-operation. We have also taken note of the recent report of the Declaration Assessment Team. We expect that the Declaration Assessment team will continue to receive full cooperation from the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Chairman,

India believes that the Education and outreach activities are the most potent tools for promoting the objectives of this organisation. In this regard, we welcome and support the proposal of the Technical Secretariat for the establishment of an Advisory Board on Education and Outreach. The emergence of non-state actors clouds the chemical disarmament landscape and poses a challenge for all of us. The manufacture of chemical weapons and designing of their delivery system does not require big investments or sophisticated technology; nor is it difficult to obtain the required raw materials. Therefore, renewed vigilance against re- emergence of chemical weapons becomes more important. The emphasis given by the Technical Secretariat on Education and Outreach is a welcome step. In India, we are currently undertaking stakeholder consultations on including chemical weapons convention in the curricula of school and colleges to spread awareness.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has taken note of the Technical Secretariat paper on “Procedure for handling cases of Schedule I chemicals as Unavoidable By-products” (No.S/1272/2015). There are some questions that this paper raises. We believe that more studies and discussions may be appropriate before the Technical Secretariat implements this procedure.

Mr. Chairman

Article XI of the Convention reminds us that advancements in chemistry hold the key for further technological and economic development of the world. The full and effective implementation of Article XI is vital for attaining the objectives of the Convention. My delegation commends the initiative of the Facilitator Ms Abeer S. Khaleefah and the Technical Secretariat in this regard and hopes that further discussion on the proposals submitted by all the State Parties to strengthen the implementation of the Article XI would be held in an atmosphere of trust and co-operation.

Mr.Chairman,

It is heartening to see that the Temporary Working Group (TWG) recommends Chemical Safety and Security as a goal to be pursued by the OPCW. Safety requires knowledge, skill and commitment of not only the workers and management of chemical facilities but also of the public at large. A breach in chemical security can affect large sections of people who are in the vicinity but not directly associated with the chemical facility. A persuasive rather than a coercive platform needs to be employed for fostering safety consciousness. India has initiated the “Safety Rating System” for voluntary adoption by industry. The system is becoming increasingly popular. The International Co-operation and Assistance Division of the Technical Secretariat deserve commendation for having taken up a number of initiatives in this direction. But there should be not let up in this endeavour. Best practices in chemical safety should reach every corner of the world.

Mr. Chairman

We congratulate the Technical Secretariat for encouraging all the States Parties to adopt modern Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) in the processing

and transmission of information pertaining to the Convention. The EDNA (Electronic Declaration for National Authorities) and the SIX (Secure Information Exchange) are creditable achievements for the Secretariat as well as for the States Parties. I am happy to inform that we are not only filing the Annual Declarations, but also other information through the SIX. As of now, the SIX is used only for bilateral communication between the National Authorities and the Technical Secretariat but we do hope that communication among the National Authorities will become a reality as the SIX mechanism matures.

In the end, Mr. Chairman, I would request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

Thank you.