



OPCW

Executive Council

Seventy-Ninth Session

7 – 9 July 2015

EC-79/NAT.14

7 July 2015

ENGLISH and SPANISH only

ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HORACIO SALVADOR
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I welcome you both on my behalf and that of the Argentine delegation, while reiterating the assurances of our highest consideration and confidence in your leadership in conducting the Council's sessions.

I would like to voice some comments concerning, first of all, the reports presented by the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü in his opening statement which made reference to the latest advances toward the universality of the Convention.

In particular, the upcoming and potential accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention by the Republic of South Sudan, Myanmar, and the Republic of Angola represent a shot of vitality to the Organisation and also constitute a substantial contribution toward the objective of achieving a world free of chemical weapons. We unite with all of those who have encouraged said countries to take the decision to unite with the OPCW and we encourage them to successfully complete this process. We congratulate the Director-General and his team for their work.

At the same time, we also reiterate our call to the only three States required to achieve universality of the Convention, to consider acceding as soon as possible and take inspiration from the examples shown.

The progress that continues to be seen in the various activities that the OPCW is developing in the Syrian Arab Republic deserves attention. In this sense, and in accordance with what was reported by the Director-General, and in relation to the chemical weapons production facilities, the OPCW has verified the destruction of four underground structures. At the same time, six hangars are now ready for the initiation of the destruction process. We also await the report of the ninth visit of the Declaration Assessment Team and the announcement of the tenth visit in the coming month.

On the other hand, we have recently heard the interim reports of the Fact-Finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. These missions are affirmed as important tools for promoting the fundamental objectives of the Organisation. It remains clear to us that a great degree of efficacy will depend both on its ability to collect the majority of the elements relating to the facts under examination, and thus on the objective conclusions that be materially reached.



After having sustained these missions as suitable tools, we must maintain the balance and the moderation necessary to examine their results.

We once again recognise all of the experts and staff of the Technical Secretariat who have carried out and continue to carry out their work under very challenging circumstances. We trust that all of the parties will continue to collaborate to achieve the satisfactory conclusion of this process as soon as possible.

This session's agenda includes the Director-General's proposal to form an Advisory Board for Education and Outreach.

Preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons is a necessary correlate of the destruction of existing stockpiles if we seek to achieve a world free of chemical weapons as the Chemical Weapons Convention stipulates.

As regards prevention, which involves many aspects, education and outreach have a key role to play.

Since 2001, by virtue of education on the rights and obligations of the Convention, together with alignment and interaction among the various international actors linked to the object and purpose of the Convention, constitute a part of the OPCW's agenda. In this lengthy process and in view of both old and new challenges, the Director-General has supported what was agreed upon at the Third Review Conference and the recommendations made by the experts of the Scientific Advisory Board to propose the creation of an Advisory Board on Education and Outreach.

As many speakers have said, we agree that the proposal represents an effective and efficient mechanism to fully drive forward the activities that the OPCW is carrying out in this area. These activities are developing now and will surely also feature in the future. Thus, the actions that are developing in the field of education and outreach make a positive contribution to the implementation of the various articles of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

For this reason, we hope that the proposal will have sufficient support and that this Executive Council will be able to recommend the creation of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach at the upcoming Conference of the States Parties.

The agenda for this session also has separate points for discussion on Articles VII, X, and XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We would have liked to continue the practice of discussing the issues relevant to Articles VII and X on one side, and Article XI on the other, in separate sessions. We believe that this practices would facilitate a more conducive and productive discussion of these important parts of the Convention. We hope that we can agree to return to said practice in the future. As the opportunity presents itself over the course of the Council sessions, we will expand on each one of the issues in detail.

The need to reach a consensus on the future of the OPCW is even more critical now that the end of the chemical disarmament process is in sight.

We had already agreed upon a general and balanced vision for the OPCW in the mid- and long-term outlook during the Third Review Conference. Recently, the Director-General has

issued two separate documents describing his vision of the future profile of the Organisation and its priorities, the hierarchical structure, and the professional composition of the Technical Secretariat. We thank him and his team for the efforts made to prepare these documents.

We agree with other delegations that the best way to tackle this discussion and reach a necessary consensus on a matter of transcendental importance is to establish a clear and inclusive procedure for discussing the basis of the Director-General's valuable proposals and, in line with what has been agreed upon by all States Parties at the Third Review Conference. This will permit us to maintain a balanced result in which the fundamental pillars of the OPCW are in place, and among them the development and cooperation of the chemical industry for peaceful purposes.

We believe that a schedule of meetings will provide us with adequate inclusive space to reflect together and engage in an exchange of opinions toward reaching the necessary consensus by the agreed deadlines. Whatever the result of this process, the decisions will be adopted afterward by the principle political organ of the Organisation.

The delegation of Argentina will participate constructively in this dialogue, which we believe is timely and necessary.

One final word to voice our best wishes to Ms Grace Asirwatham, who is leaving her post as Deputy Director-General.

We join the other members of this Council in expressing our gratitude and wish her success in this new stage of her life.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session.

Thank you.

- - - 0 - - -