



**Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
The Hague**

Statement by

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**The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Netherlands and
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the OPCW
at the Eighty-First Session of the Executive Council
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In the Name of God

Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, please allow me to welcome you back to the Chair of the Executive Council. My delegation will work closely with you, and with other delegations, in a joint effort to bring the deliberations of all the agenda items of this session to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the Organization and its future development, which is of the utmost importance for its effectiveness. However, we should bear in mind that any changes in the structure and activities of the Organization shall not lead to its diversion from the main core objective, namely disarmament. In this regard, we would like to stress that since significant amounts of chemical weapons stockpiles as well as old and abandoned chemical weapons are yet to be destroyed, the primary mandate of the Organization is the total destruction and complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chairperson,

Regarding the decision taken at the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties on the establishment of a Working Group on Future Priorities of the OPCW, we are of the view that addressing the future priorities discussions must not undermine the importance of the main functions and mandates of the OPCW in the field of disarmament, universality and the effective implementation of Article XI.

Mr. Chairperson,

On Article XI, I would like to recall that the agreement on Article XI has been one of the primary motives of developing countries to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. However, since the adoption of the Convention, the progress achieved in the implementation of this Article has not met the objectives of the Convention. We would like to emphasize the importance of holding a review and evaluation workshop to address gaps and obstacles and provide necessary measures for the effective implementation of Article XI.

I would also like to thank the facilitator for Article XI, for his work and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts regarding full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI and increasing international cooperation and capacity-building in the field of chemistry.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the substantive progress achieved in the destruction process of the Syrian Chemical Weapons and is pleased with the level of cooperation that the Syrian Arab Republic demonstrates with the Technical Secretariat to resolve the remaining issues and to fulfill its obligations under the Convention.

It is worth mentioning that the Islamic Republic of Iran has shared its experiences with the Syrian Arab Republic to implement its obligations and is still ready to provide more assistances.

Despite facing a difficult security situation under war and conflict in its territory, as well as, a lack of expertise and experiences under the Convention, the Syrian Government has shown its determination to meet its obligations in a cooperative and transparent manner. These efforts must be recognized and appreciated by the States Parties, rather than taking any inappropriate actions which would derail the ongoing Syrian peace process in this very critical phase.

At this stage, instead of politicizing the Syrian issue, it is time to assist the government of the Syrian Arab Republic to fulfil its commitments through enhancing its national capacity building to resolve the remaining outstanding items. Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran is in the view of that no more extraordinary actions are required accordingly.

It is sad to say, since the beginning of the destruction of chemical weapons of the Syrian Arab Republic, we have witnessed a number of States Parties that

have tried to politicize this technical body and are still trying to maintain their pressure on Syria under various pretexts.

The main question that I would like to raise to this august body is whether the threat posed by the terrorist groups in the region is less critical than some discrepancies in the initial declarations submitted by a newly acceded State Party? It comes to mind that this approach is some sort of double standard towards similar issues.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have recently witnessed several systematic chemical attacks by terrorist groups in different parts of the world, especially in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Last week ISIS launched two chemical attacks near the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, killing and wounding hundreds of people and causing many more to flee. In this regard, a medical team from the Islamic Republic of Iran was dispatched to the region to provide victims medicine and emergency medical services as soon as possible.

The chemical threat by terrorist groups is immediate and requires urgent actions by the OPCW and Member States.

Mr. Chairperson,

We take note of the decision taken at the Fifty-First Meeting of the Executive Council on the destruction of Libya's remaining chemical weapons stockpiles, taking into account the existing threat of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles falling into the hands of terrorist groups, especially ISIS. We are of the view that any action regarding the destruction of the chemical weapons in Libya must be undertaken with regard to different aspects including time, safety and security. Meanwhile the decision taken at the Fifty-First Meeting of the Executive Council took into account the exceptional and extraordinary circumstances in Libya, created by an undeniable threat by the terrorist groups and according to the request made by the Government of Libya. Therefore, it cannot be considered a precedent in future work of the Organization.

Thank you.

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