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CHILE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE
EIGHTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

As we welcome you to your last regular session of the Executive Council, we reiterate our willingness to work together, under your direction, as we turn to the agenda, which requires in-depth discussion.

We welcome the Director-General's report on the status of the Organisation and the activities that have been under development, as well as the reports presented by the Vice-Chairpersons and facilitators.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement on behalf of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, voiced this morning by the head of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We are pleased to note the complete elimination of the chemical weapons declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as significant progress in the destruction of production facilities, and we await the soonest possible conclusion as permitted by the security situation there.

In terms of the consultations under way toward resolving the matter of gaps and inconsistencies in the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, we have carefully read the report presented by the Director-General on the work performed by the Declaration Assessment Team, identifying important areas in which it has not been possible to progress and other areas that have given rise to new questions. While recognising that we still do not have the results from the analyses of some samples collected on-site, we are concerned that the Technical Secretariat is coming to the conclusion that it cannot, at the present moment, verify that the accuracy and completeness of the declaration and the subsequent amendments provided by the Syrian authorities comply with the requirements of the Convention and the decision of this Executive Council, dated 27 September 2013.

The Declaration Assessment Team has acted with professionalism and dedication, and we believe it is fundamental that the Syrian authorities broaden their cooperation with the Technical Secretariat in order to promptly address unresolved matters. The credibility of this Organisation is a value that we wish to strengthen, and we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to broaden its collaboration with the work it has initiated and to participate in the search for



ways to facilitate this process so as to clarify any and all questions regarding the termination of its chemical weapons programme. A consensus is a tool in this Council's work, and it is a tool that we must not immediately rule out.

With regard to the Fact-Finding Mission, we welcome the work that has been done by the staff of the Technical Secretariat, the reports dated 17 December 2015, and the addendum dated 29 February 2016 on the investigations into the allegations voiced by the Syrian Government, in particular the events alleged to have taken place in Darayya on 15 February 2015. We note that in spite of the additional efforts that have been made, it has not been possible to produce conclusive results.

Chile reiterates its fundamental position condemning the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any circumstances, as well as its conviction that those responsible for those attacks must be held accountable. In this regard, we welcome the work done to date by the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the OPCW and the United Nations, and the collaboration that our Organisation has contributed. We are confident that it will be able to progress towards its goals and that its very existence will help deter those who intend to continue using chemical weapons. For this reason, we will continue to support the continued work of the Fact-Finding Mission so that it can investigate all of the credible allegations concerning the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Regarding the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons in Libya, we look forward to examining the Director-General's report on the possible options available for completing this task, taking into account technical, operational, security, financial, and economic factors. While we understand that the matter at hand brings us to some bumps in the road, as the time anticipated by experts will not be sufficient, we reiterate the importance of assisting Libya in its efforts to prevent these weapons from falling into the hands of non-State actors. This task requires that we pool our efforts as much as possible in order to complete the destruction of these chemical agents, while taking into account existing alternatives and international assistance.

This session's agenda includes an item on Article XI of the Convention in response to requests from a great number of delegations from diverse regional groups. In addition to appreciating the successful programmes that the Technical Secretariat is working on in a variety of areas, we also welcome the interest demonstrated during the last facilitation in working towards a systematic and integral approach on capacity developing programmes, initiatives on exchanging equipment and courses aimed at improving the abilities of other laboratories in order to perform better on the OPCW's proficiency tests, among other things, bringing together some of the proposals voiced by the Non-Aligned Movement.

We firmly believe there is a need for a practical and systematic approach for the full and effective implementation of Article XI, and we support the proposal to organise a workshop for review and broad evaluation in order to identify the areas in which more work is needed to achieve the full implementation of the decision that the Conference of the States Parties adopted on this matter at its Sixteenth Session. Among these are measures aimed at facilitating the exchange of chemicals, equipment, and technical and scientific information, and thus continue to move forward toward the full implementation of the Convention.

We welcome the decision of the Conference of the States Parties on establishing an open-ended working group to address and develop recommendations on the future priorities

of the OPCW for consideration at the Fourth Review Conference. The discussions within the group must be transparent and inclusive, and based on all of the pillars of the Convention. In order to avoid any duplication of effort and make the most of existing synergies, the group must take into account the work and initiatives of other existing groups, while maintaining a holistic and integral approach when recommendations are made for the future priorities of the Organisation. This delegation voices its interest in constructively participating in the discussion of the mandate of this open-ended working group, which should be agreed upon by the States Parties.

In connection with the above and in light of the importance of education and outreach programmes aimed at achieving the principle objectives of the Convention, we welcome the establishment of the Advisory Board for Education and Outreach and the designation of its members by the Director-General. We acknowledge the efforts to achieve an inclusive membership in terms of geographical and gender representation, which will make it possible to progress even further in a variety of the areas within the Organisation.

The persistent allegations of the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors demonstrate that this phenomenon is regrettably the reality. These allegations—both in Syria and Iraq—have been the subject of investigation by the Technical Secretariat and we are carefully studying the report by OPCW's technical assistance visit following their visit to Iraq to collaborate on the investigations by that country's authorities into the incidents that took place in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The above demonstrates the importance of addressing the phenomenon of chemical terrorism within the framework of the Organisation and the work it has been doing over several years within the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism. In our collaboration with these efforts, we have tried to bear in mind the need to acknowledge the diverse opinions that exist on the legal aspects associated with the acts of these actors, as well as on prevention and acceptable response measures; this is the focus of the agenda of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors. We believe there is room to advance concrete recommendations while respecting the sovereignty of the States, strengthening the implementation of the Convention, and accounting for both the legal and technical forms of cooperation that correspond to this threat.

Mr Chairperson, Chile shares the concerns surrounding the risks of the use of toxic central nervous system-acting chemicals as riot control agents and their potential use as chemical weapons. For this reason, together with other countries, we promote an open discussion on this matter with the participation of the Technical Secretariat in order to come up with recommendations for these chemicals, move forward in preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, and respond to the concerns that challenge the Convention.

We would like to take advantage of this opportunity to welcome the nomination of Ambassador Odette Melono of Cameroon to serve as the next Chairperson of this Executive Council in the future, and we wish her success.

I would like to request, Mr Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of this session and that it be published on the OPCW website.

Thank you.