



**Statement by
Mr. Kazi Russel Pervez, Counsellor of the Embassy of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh in the Netherlands and Alternate Permanent Representative to the
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the Eighty-Seventh Session of
the Executive Council**

The Hague, 13-16 March 2018

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Chairperson of the Executive Council, Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal,
Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

At the very outset, I welcome Your Excellency Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal back as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. I would like to express our confidence in you and look forward to the successful conclusion of this session under your able leadership.

Our delegation wishes to thank the Director-General for his comprehensive statement as well as the Vice-Chairpersons for their respective reports presented at this session.

The delegation of Bangladesh is, once again, honoured to pay tribute to Your Excellency Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü for your invaluable contribution as the Director-General of the OPCW over the last eight years for the cause of humanity and for our shared goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

We take the opportunity to extend our warm felicitations and good wishes to His Excellency Ambassador Fernando Arias of Spain on his appointment for the position of the Director-General of the OPCW by the Twenty-Second Conference of the States Parties upon unanimous recommendation by the Eighty-Sixth Session of the Executive Council.

Bangladesh delegation aligns itself with the statement made at this session by the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Her Excellency Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

Last year, we celebrated the Twentieth Anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the establishment of the OPCW. The success of the Chemical Weapons Convention over the last twenty years is certainly enviable. However, numerous allegations concerning use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and elsewhere over the last few years have undoubtedly challenged our collective conscience. As an original signatory to the Convention, Bangladesh is firmly committed to the aspirations of the OPCW in making the world safer by eliminating the threat of chemical weapons both by destroying the stockpile and preventing the re-emergence of such a weapon in any form. We would like to reiterate our utmost support for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW towards achieving our common goal.

We would like to reiterate our long-standing principled position towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and reaffirm that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention and all norms of international law. In this regard, we express our deep concerns on the reports of use and alleged use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and elsewhere. Bangladesh strongly condemns the repeated use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and reaffirms that those responsible must be held accountable. We urge all to uphold the Convention under any circumstances.

Bangladesh acknowledges the importance of continuation of the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) in the Syrian Arab Republic for investigation of all the alleged use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons. We look forward to receiving further reports of the FFM on its ongoing activities in the Syrian Arab Republic as soon as possible.

While we note progress in disposing of the declared chemical weapons stockpile and production facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic, we would strongly encourage further consultations between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Technical Secretariat to resolve all outstanding issues in a spirit of confidence and cooperation.

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh commends the Russian Federation for completing the destruction of its declared chemical weapons stockpile. We are convinced that the Russian Federation has set an example before the world expressing its commitment towards a world free of chemical weapons and shall equally continue their good work in safeguarding the Convention globally. We would also like to commend Libya for completing the destruction of its declared chemical weapons stockpile, and also Iraq for completing the destruction of its entire declared stockpile of chemical weapons remnants under OPCW Verification. We are confident that destruction process in the USA would surely be completed within the stipulated dateline of 2023, if not earlier.

Bangladesh appreciates the successes of the OPCW towards complete destruction of the stockpile of chemical weapons. We hope that this Organisation would work with a renewed spirit of cooperation to eliminate the possibility of any further use of chemical weapons anywhere by anyone under any circumstances.

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh continues to fulfil its obligations under Article VII of the Convention relating to national implementation measures. While we deeply appreciate the encouragement and active support of the Technical Secretariat to this end, Bangladesh believes that the States Parties lacking capacity and capability would get appropriate assistance and technical support for enabling them for the full implementation of the Convention.

Bangladesh is convinced that the adoption of an action plan for the full and effective implementation of Article XI is paramount. We welcome the States Parties' commitment to promote peaceful uses of chemistry under Article XI. Bangladesh welcomes the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat to enhance the implementation of Article XI and urges all for a systematic approach to the full and effective implementation of this Article taking into due consideration the needs of developing States Parties.

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh recognises the importance of future priorities of the OPCW, and in this regard commends the dedicated works by the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future

Priorities, guided by the Co-Chairs, Ambassador Sabine Nölke of Canada and Ambassador Bruce Koloane of South Africa. We hope to see the final recommendations of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities in a holistic, forward-looking, and action-oriented document.

Bangladesh also likes to commend the continued works of the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, Ambassador Momar Diop of Senegal, and Chairperson of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, Ambassador María Teresa Infante of Chile. We would like to encourage further dialogue and discussion on these pertinent issues.

Mr. Chairperson,

The changing security environment and advancement of science and technology have obviously added new challenges to the Organisation. The advancement in the convergence of chemistry and biology, especially the biological synthesis of toxic chemicals, potential toxicity of nano-particulate material, etc. may have the potential for malicious exploitation. To prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and the use of toxic chemicals as weapons by non-State actors and terrorist organizations, we believe that development of national capacities especially of the developing States Parties in the areas of forensic capabilities, environmental and clinical/biomedical samples, toxins, etc. is paramount. We also hope that this Organisation, as a part of its outreach, should endeavour to engage more young generation in its activities as well as to help contribute towards achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDGs. In this regard, we hope that the Fourth Review Conference would be a milestone event to provide strategic guidance to this Organisation as well as setup future priorities and action plans towards our shared goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

We commend the important works done so far by the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fourth Review Conference under the leadership of Chairperson H.E. Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia. We commit our wholehearted support to the Open-Ended Working Group towards making the Fourth Review Conference a great success for the benefit of the mankind.

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to emphasise again that it is imperative to ensure an equitable geographical and balanced gender representation, particularly at the professional level in the Technical Secretariat in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44 of the Chemical Weapons Convention not only to reflect the true international character of the OPCW but also to strengthen ownership of the States Parties to this Organisation. We believe that the JPO programme would be an important step towards equitable geographical representation. As a capacity-building measure, we hope that the Technical Secretariat will find innovative means like dedicated funding arrangement to cater to the applicants from the developing States Parties for the JPO programme.

Mr. Chairperson,

Before I conclude, let us commit once again to achieve our shared goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

I ask that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Session of the Executive Council.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
