



OPCW

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

STATEMENT BY H.E. KAZEM GHARIB ABADI, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE OPCW AT THE THIRTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation welcomes you back to the chair of this meeting of the Executive Council. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation to steer this meeting to a successful conclusion.

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the main victim of contemporary use of chemical weapons, was deeply disappointed to hear that these inhumane weapons were used in Syria. Sixteen years after the entry into force of the Convention, using chemical weapons in conflicts is regrettable. We reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any circumstances is a gross violation of legally established international norms, in particular, the Chemical Weapons Convention, in prohibiting the use of weapons of mass destruction.

As a principal policy, Iran firmly believes in the total elimination of all categories of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including chemical weapons, in the world, specifically in the sensitive Middle East region. We have always stressed that establishing a WMD-free zone in the region is an imperative condition to achieve stable peace and security in the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes constructive, positive and timely cooperation from the Syrian Arab Republic with the investigation team and is of the view that the investigation should continue to examine the other alleged cases and expose the perpetrators of these crimes. As the members of the Executive Council, we should take into account that the team was established initially upon the request of the Syrian Government and was only able to accomplish its mission to investigate the event on 21 August due to their timely cooperation. According to some information, chemical weapons have been used by terrorist groups. We have warned from the beginning against terrorists' access to chemical weapons and their transfer to them.



Mr Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the decision of the Syrian Arab Republic to accede to the Convention and notes this decision as a significant step toward achieving universality of the Convention. We expect other States not Party to the Convention, especially the Israeli regime, to follow this pattern and accede to it without further delay or precondition. The Israeli's WMD arsenals are the main source of concern and are a threat to regional and international peace and security. Given the accession of Syria to the Convention, there is no justification or excuse for this regime to stay out of disarmament treaties, including the Chemical Weapons Convention, or to maintain and develop its WMD stockpiles.

Mr Chairperson,

We hope that the political agreement reached in Geneva on the elimination of chemical weapons in Syria will guarantee the establishment of peace in Syria, including through the total rejection of the military option and resumption of political negotiation. The Islamic Republic of Iran supported the process of Syria's accession to the Convention constructively and made positive recommendations in this regard. It should be considered that assisting the Syrian Government to extend its control throughout the country to meet its obligations under the Convention, including those related to chemical weapons in the hands of terrorist groups, is crucial for the implementation of this decision in this process. The declaration and elimination of chemical weapons in the hands of terrorist groups inside Syria is an important fact that unfortunately is missed in the text of the decision.

Given that there are still six States not Party to the Convention, I would like to draw the attention of the Executive Council to the fact that the way we deal with the Syrian accession to the Convention will have an impact on the decision of those who still remain outside of the Convention to accede to it.

Mr Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran tried to bring the text of the decision into line with the provisions of the Convention. As an independent Organisation, while considering the extraordinary situation, we should adopt a fair, conventional, realistic decision. Needless to say, as it was recognised by the decision, this decision should not create any precedent for the future and shall have no impact on the rights and obligations of the States Parties.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, I would like to request that this statement be issued as an official document of the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Executive Council.

Thank you.