

**Madam Chairperson, Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,**

I welcome back Ambassador Jana Reinišová of the Czech Republic, as Chairperson of this Council. I am confident in your ability to successfully steer the deliberations of the Council and assure you of the full support of my delegation.

My delegation would also like to warmly welcome the Director General, H.E. Mr Fernando Arias, to his first Executive Council session in his new role. We assure you of our strong support as you lead the organisation's efforts to rid the world of chemical weapons. We thank the DG for his very informative and comprehensive statement delivered at this session.

The Nigerian delegation aligns itself with the statement of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, which was delivered by H.E. Ms Haifa Aissami Madah, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW. The Nigerian delegation also aligns itself with the statement of the African Group, delivered by H.E. Mr Abdelouahab Bellouki, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco.

**Madam Chairperson,**

One of the core objectives of the Convention is the complete destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, and prevention of use of toxic chemicals as weapons at any time, by anyone and under any circumstances. Nigeria fully subscribes to this objective, and pledges to support other states parties and the Technical Secretariat in its full attainment. Another core objective of this organisation is the promotion of the peaceful use of chemistry worldwide and promotion of the economic and technological development of all states parties. Nigeria wishes to stress that this second

objective is inexorably linked to the first. So long as there are states parties with lack of capacity to monitor the production, use and transfer of toxic chemicals, there exists a threat of chemical weapons use or chemical terrorism worldwide. Hence, Nigeria calls upon the Secretariat to attach high priority to tailor-made capacity building activities of less-developed states parties. As this is also a core objective of the CWC, such programmes should be anchored upon the regular budget of the organisation, to guarantee its sustainability.

Regarding the Africa Programme, Nigeria commends the continuous engagement of the Secretariat with the African States Parties, particularly the organisation of various capacity building and training programmes around the continent. In this regard, Nigeria is pleased to host an OPCW-organised Pilot Workshop on the Role of Implementing Legislation in Addressing Threats Arising from Non-State Actors, from 16 – 18 October 2018, at Abuja. We believe that such programmes are necessary for the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the African Continent.

**Madam Chairperson,**

This organisation is currently preparing for the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operations of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fourth Review Conference), via the Open-Ended Working Group established for that purpose. My delegation is grateful to the Chairperson of the Working Group, Ambassador Puja of Indonesia, for his diligent work in collating the diverse views of states parties, and dexterity in steering the deliberations of the Working Group. Nigeria calls on all states parties to engage in good-faith dialogue and negotiations towards repositioning our organisation to be responsive to the peculiar challenges in the next five (5) years.

We note the current protracted negotiations and diverse views on the 2019 Programme and Budget of the OPCW. We note that the Secretariat has a duty to implement all decisions of the Policy-Making Organs (PMOs) of the organisation, within a shoe-string budget. Whilst recognising the value of a zero-nominal growth budget, we call on states parties to show flexibility in their approach towards assisting the secretariat implement, without discrimination, all decisions of the PMOs. In this regard, we call on the Secretariat to make its budgeting processes and procedures more transparent and provide clarification to states parties, upon request.

We wish to reiterate our call on all states parties to strive towards the attainment of consensus in the work of this organisation and stress the imperative for good faith, dialogue and cooperation among states parties. It is only in such atmosphere that the noble goals of the Convention will be fully attained.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Session and posted on the External Server of the OPCW.

Thank you for your attention.