



STATEMENT BY MR. PIUS BIGIRIMANA, PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AT THE FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (FOURTH REVIEW CONFERENCE), 21 – 30 NOVEMBER 2018

Mr. Chairperson, Excellency Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

1. I would like to join the distinguished delegates who have spoken before me to welcome you as Chairperson of the Fourth Review Conference. I am confident that under your able leadership you will steer the Conference to a successful conclusion. I also wish to welcome the Director-General, H.E. Fernando Arias and thank him for the comprehensive report and his leadership of the OPCW.
2. I also wish to thank the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fourth Review Conference, H.E. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of Indonesia for his dedication in the preparation of the Draft Provisional Text.
3. Uganda associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group of States Parties and on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Uganda would like to stress that the Fourth Review Conference upholds the Chemical Weapons Convention in its entirety and ensure a balanced implementation of its provisions by all States Parties. Uganda attaches great importance to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and would like to call upon States that are not yet Party to the Convention to ratify or accede and fully implement its provisions. This will guarantee more safety and security on our continent and the world at large.

4. My delegation would like to stress that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals anywhere by anyone are contrary to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and those found to be responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable. Uganda considers the destruction of chemical weapons as a commitment of every State Party to the Convention. Whereas 96 percent of the chemical weapons stockpiles declared have been destroyed, we would encourage the complete destruction of all remaining chemical weapons stockpiles as soon as possible. With regard to Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda takes note of the work so far done by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and looks forward to receiving its reports.

Mr. Chairperson,

5. Uganda appreciates the ongoing exchange of knowledge, provision of equipment and related technologies, and capacity building programmes that promote the safe use of chemicals for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. My delegation looks forward to the outcome of discussions among African States Parties, the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW and other stakeholders on the implementation of Africa Programme.
The Fourth Review Conference should recognize the need to continue allocating resources to the Africa Programme to ensure its success.
6. Uganda does not possess, produce or have stockpiles of chemical weapons. However the support from the Technical Secretariat in the implementation of the programme for Africa has continued to infuse the necessary skills and capacity building within the implementation of the Convention which will assist my country in its economic

development. Uganda has benefitted from the East African Community (EAC) Chemical Emergency Response, Planning and Management Mechanism.

7. My delegation commends the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, especially the Assistance and Protection Branch, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom and other partners for their continued cooperation and support in making this essential mechanism a reality for the East African Region.
8. In this regard, Uganda hosted members from States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention from the East African region for the Third Operational Training in Emergency Response to Chemical Incident or attack from 24 October – 1 November 2018 in Jinja, Uganda. The main objective of the training was to equip the participants with knowledge and skills in handling emergencies involving toxic chemicals. The training was facilitated by experts from the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom coordinated by OPCW. A total of 36 participants from Burundi, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda were trained. This training is in line of capacity building for the region to provide future trainings in the region using the pool of experts trained under this programme.
9. Uganda wishes to propose that an Academy to operate as a center of excellence in capacity building in areas related to the implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention and Conventions on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear be established in Uganda. My delegation requests for support from any State Party in order to realise the idea.

Mr. Chairperson,

10. My delegation supports the need for more equitable geographical and gender representation in the professional ranks of the Organisation and a fair and transparent employment/recruitment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat.

11. The last point Mr. Chairperson, Uganda, like many other States Parties, regrets the fact that of recent, some decisions are no longer taken unanimously, but through voting. This trend is worrying and is negatively affecting the implementation of the OPCW mandate. Moreover, as we already witnessed, this may lead to unnecessary politicisation of some issues which is regrettable.

12. In conclusion Mr. Chairperson, Uganda is fully committed to its obligations under the Convention and encourages States Parties to work towards achieving consensus and a successful conclusion of this Fourth Review Conference.

I thank you for your attention.

I would like to request that this statement be published as an official document of this session.