



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

THE OPCW AND CHEMICAL TERRORISM

1. Terrorism in all its aspects, including chemical terrorism has been a matter of grave concern for the international community in recent years. The Middle East and Northern Africa region particularly has been the target of terrorist attacks including chemical one where the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has yet to be universal. In this volatile region the Zionist regime of Israel with its established WMDs program including chemical weapons has not yet acceded to the CWC. Though, universality of the CWC in the region is numerically in a good position, non-adherence of this regime to the CWC fuels concerns over the possibility of its role in promoting chemical terrorism.
2. One of the most recent instances of the Organization's role in combating chemical terrorism is in Syria where investigation was carried out by the OPCW over the application of chemical weapons by terrorist groups in the country. The Organization's Technical Secretariat investigations shed light on the responsibility of the terrorist group for use of Chemical weapons in Syria. Moreover, if no punishment or counteraction is shown towards the well-known terrorist groups who in their tendency towards using chemical weapons act recklessly, the hope for a world free from chemical terrorism would vanish.
3. Given the technical and specialized nature of the work of the Organization's Technical Secretariat, the Islamic Republic of Iran maintains that the priority and urgency for the OPCW to tackle chemical terrorism should be under Article VII for prevention and Article X for extending assistance and protection with due regard for humanitarian aspects.
4. Following the developments at international levels on fighting terrorism, the OPCW has created an Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism to review the role played by non-state actors as well as a sub-WG specially designed for fighting against terrorism a weighty result of whose activities is Addressing Non-State Actors in a decision approved in 2017 according to which, the States Parties and the Organization are persuaded to cooperate and take action for punishing delinquent non-state actors.
5. While stressing the necessity of protecting independence and identity of the OPCW as a disarmament Organization, the Islamic Republic of Iran is opposed to any move towards modifying its mandates in such a way that it looks like a mere anti-terrorism organization.



6. We firmly believe that the agenda of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and its achievements should be agreed by all States Parties and engagement of the Organization in the issues related to the topic should be supervised by the Policy Making Organs in the framework of the CWC.
7. As paragraph 2 of Article VII points out, each and every State Party shall cooperate with other States Parties and afford the appropriate form of legal assistance to facilitate the implementation of the obligations regarding national implementation which indeed extend to fighting against chemical terrorism too. As far as terrorism is concerned, like any other phenomena, cooperation with bigger international organizations such as the UN should be within the framework of the provisions of the Convention and resorting to regional organizations to which all the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention are not a member, would not be accepted and agreed upon.

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