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MEXICO

**STATEMENT BY EVERARDO CORONA
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Distinguished representatives, delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Madam Chairperson, Ambassador Jana Reinišová,

The Mexican delegation would like to reiterate its confidence in your leadership and ability to lead this session to a successful conclusion. You have our complete support and cooperation.

In addition, we would like to congratulate the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, because since he took office, his extraordinary work ethic has allowed him to guide the work of the Technical Secretariat in accordance with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and direct the efforts and different positions of the State Parties towards our common goal: "a world free of chemical weapons".

Ambassador Fernando Arias, we would like to reiterate our full support and confidence.

It is undeniable that the Chemical Weapons Convention and its representative body are facing a critical moment; however, our goals and joint actions remain the same, and it is the responsibility of all State Parties to work intensively and collaborate in order to ensure that regrettable events such as those occurred in Iraq, Malaysia, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the United Kingdom never occur again. These horrible occurrences warn us that we must redouble our collective efforts to neutralise these challenges by allocating responsibility and identifying those responsible for these events.

That is the message we have received from Ambassador Arias, and in this regard, we thank him for his clear report that reminds us of our main objective: "Work for the non-proliferation of chemical weapons". To achieve this goal, it is important to maintain the health of our Organisation and to continue to provide it with highly trained and creative professionals, as well as reinforce its operational tools to face current and future challenges.

For Mexico, multilateralism represents a commitment between the collective actions of the States, their governments, and civil societies to face global challenges, which demand faster and more effective responses. Mexico strongly believes that the concerted action of the States Parties of the OPCW is the guiding thread that can overcome the challenges faced today by the Chemical Weapons Convention and our Organisation.



The Government of Mexico believes that the international society will be closely observing what happens in this multilateral forum and therefore welcomes the information of the Technical Secretariat that 96% of the declared chemical weapons of category 1 have been destroyed, as well as 100% of the declared chemical weapons of category 2 and category 3. This progress highlights the fact that in 2017 three States Parties concluded the destruction of their complete arsenal of declared chemical weapons (the Russian Federation, Libya, and Iraq).

The Government of Mexico applauds the commitment and efforts of the United States to continue accelerating its program of destruction of declared chemical weapons of category 1, with the hope that it will complete the process of eliminating these chemical weapons before September 2023. Additionally, Mexico encourages the governments of China and Japan to increase their actions to accelerate the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons in Chinese territory.

Mexico welcomes the report related of the destruction of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by Syria and that the Technical Secretariat has verified the destruction of 100% of the category 1 and category 2 arsenals declared by the Syrian government. While recognising the efforts and the progress, which has been made, Mexico encourages the Syrian government to strengthen its collaboration with the Technical Secretariat in order to resolve the pending issues related to its initial declaration.

The Mexican government recognises the willingness of the Technical Secretariat to promote the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention through policies and programmes to increase the capacity of the States Parties to respond to incidents related to the use of chemical weapons or accidents caused by chemical substances. Therefore, my government considers that the best way to contribute to maintaining international peace and security is to promote the economic development of the countries, which includes the development of their chemical industries through international cooperation in its broadest sense, in accordance with Articles VII, X, and XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We must not forget that the Secretariat itself has stated that the way to "achieve universal membership of the OPCW is through the facilitation of international cooperation and national capacity-building".

Mexico supports the idea to establish a new program for the GRULAC, similar to the Africa Program, in order to accelerate the implementation of the Convention in this region.

The Government of Mexico considers that prevention takes precedence over reaction and reiterates its commitment to the Education and Outreach program. In this regard, Mexico appreciates the development of the user-friendly brochure that States Parties may use in their teaching activities and consequently proposes that on the new OPCW website, a section is established which focuses exclusively on the outreach and teaching regarding the prevention of the resurgence of chemical weapons.

Mexico, while applauding the decision adopted during the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties, calls upon all States Parties to strengthen the OPCW as a leader in the process of disarmament, firmly supporting the mandate given to the Director-General so that the Office of Attribution of Responsibility has the necessary logistical, cybernetic, and financial structure to enable it to identify state and/or non-state perpetrators who have used, produces, organised or sponsored the use of chemical weapons.

As States Parties, we are responsible for the Organisation having a budget which meets the new challenges and we recognise the efforts of the Technical Secretariat and of its facilitator, Mr. Hassan, to understand the economic conditions of many of the States Parties to the Convention, and, likewise, to seek financial formulas that do not affect the goals or the substantial activities of the OPCW. We hope that soon we can reach a balance between these two points, where voluntary contributions, such as the one announced by the United Kingdom, are welcome.

We must not overlook the fact that the credibility and effectiveness of the OPCW will be affected if it lacks financial resources. This would paralyse its administrative and operational functionality, as well as its verification, inspection, and capacity building activities. Therefore, it is vital to comply with the payment of annual contributions on time, while at the same time not excluding the possibility of resorting to a multi-year payment plan such as the one submitted by the Republic of El Salvador.

During each session of the Executive Council and the Conference of States Parties, our delegations reaffirm that the OPCW should continue to be an example of the effective fight for disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, while stressing that we bear full responsibility to strengthen it. Today, considering the new challenges that our Organisation is facing, we have the opportunity to fulfil our commitment.

Achieving the eradication of chemical weapons requires the collective action of all States Parties within the legal framework provided by the Chemical Weapons Convention and international law. The respect for these norms will ensure peace and international security.

Finally, Mexico calls upon all States Parties to work for the common good and to use the advances in the fields of technology, cybernetics, and communication to achieve the goals of our Organisation and to support the result of its activities.

I request that this statement be considered as one of the official and public documents of this session of the Executive Council.

Thank you very much.

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