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CHILE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

We welcome you at the start of this Eighty-Ninth Session, and we wish you success in taking on the ambitious agenda of the Executive Council.

The delegation of Chile aligns itself with the statement by the Non-Aligned Movement and China, read by Her Excellency Haifa Aissami, the Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

We also extend a special welcome to the new Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, who has taken on this function at a time of vast challenges and with an international community that is anxious for the Organisation to continue moving forward in the fight against the development, production, stockpiling, and other forms of violation of the general obligations put in place by the Chemical Weapons Convention, in conflicts or against individuals, no matter who the perpetrator may be. We welcome the report presented by the Director-General this morning; it reflects an Organisation that is conscious of its responsibilities and that is confronting circumstances that require special attention.

We have noted the report of the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), dated 1 October 2018, regarding the chemical programme of the Syrian Arab Republic; we reiterate our conviction, and we urge that efforts be redoubled in order to resolve discrepancies and respond to the observations in line with the commitment that everyone has undertaken in line with the provisions of the Convention.

This Executive Council has been tasked with addressing issues of vital importance for the present and the future of the Organisation; these include the budget, which in 2019 will set out the strategic guidelines and should reflect what we are called to work on, while taking into account common interest and the effectiveness of our decisions.

Within just a few weeks, we will begin the Fourth Review Conference on the functioning of the Convention, while we advance our preparations under the able leadership of Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia within the Open-Ended Working Group. Together with our Latin American colleagues, we will make the efforts necessary to achieve consensus-based agreements and strengthen the Organisation.



On 5 October, we held a special format meeting led by Ambassador Agustín Vásquez, the Chairperson of the upcoming Review Conference, with support from the Netherlands and the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group. In addition to valuing this trust-building exercise, which brought to the surface pertinent points on crucial matters, we believe it will be useful to continue to reflect on these points.

I would refer specifically to the prospects for confronting chemical terrorism, both as States Parties and as members of an effective chemical disarmament regime, bearing in mind the conceptual framework relative to capacity building in our countries.

This meeting gave rise to proposals offering a constructive approach to finding a way to bring together the prospects for countering chemical terrorism, while relying on substantive resolutions of the Security Council and international treaties—including our Convention—implementing them within domestic legal frameworks, and using that to further integrate the efforts of the Organisation within the fields of preparation, prevention, and response. In this regard, we highlight the work of the Working Group on Terrorism and its Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, with reference to the decision that was adopted this past October on how to confront the threat of the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors (EC-86/DEC.9, dated 13 October 2019), bringing together the substantive elements on which to focus our work.

With regard to training, we trust in working to encourage the level of commitment and participation in the system. If the elements of gender balance and geographical distribution are fully integrated into this outlook, we will be fulfilling our mission in this area, and thinking of future generations.

We would also like to reiterate our special gratitude for the comprehensive Influential Visitors Programme offered by the Organisation via the International Cooperation and Assistance Division, which supported the working visit of parliament members and high-ranking representatives of our country's Defence Ministry this past September. This visit has reinvigorated our country's drive to make progress with legislation aligned with the requirements of the Convention and has updated Chile's policy-making bodies' knowledge of this Organisation's work.

The impact of the policy on the OPCW as a non-career organisation and its characteristics deserve attention. We have exchanged ideas on other occasions on this matter and stated that the States Parties, in general, wish to preserve the non-career nature of the OPCW. Yet at the same time, we have worked to analyse issues that could apply to at least two objectives:

- a) preserving the abilities of the best professionals to act when it comes to tasks where contract renewal will not guarantee all of the elements needed to act at the desired level for a specific period of time; and
- b) providing the Director-General with the authority to manage, in a flexible and regulated manner, training for the purpose of retaining certain professionals, not only in the field of inspection, and using clear-cut assessment and selection criteria.

We welcome the report of the experts contracted by the Technical Secretariat on this matter, the text of which we recently received. It constitutes a basis for working in an open manner, with a view to reaching agreements on the best policy for this Organisation that will bear fruit

in the near future. The Review Conference offers an opportunity to make progress in this area.

Another matter that we cannot ignore is that of central nervous system-acting chemicals; we support the start of an analysis on the best policy within the framework of the Convention, as a growing number of States Parties share concerns about these chemicals. These chemicals are not classified as riot control agents. The advisory bodies of the Technical Secretariat can provide fundamental collaboration in this regard. We believe that this matter is not incompatible with the consideration of new toxic chemical agents that affect the nervous system, about which we have the valuable report by the Scientific Advisory Board and proposals from States Parties.

A crucial issue is the start of the implementation of the decision on “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use”, which was adopted at the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties this past June. This decision addresses relevant matters that require consistent work with our principles and we firmly believe that they are compatible with the Convention. We do not ignore the political, technical, and legal scope of the circumstances in which this decision was adopted.

We believe in pooling our efforts to strengthen the agreements made on the most sensitive issues and for which the budget can be adapted in a way so as to preserve the integrity of the Convention and its fields of action, together with an indispensable investment in information security and appropriate technology. Through this process, the Organisation will not take the place of a tribunal—a task that corresponds first and foremost to the States—but which will provide the international community with the substantiated legal capacity to advance fact-finding activities and determine the sources of the chemical attacks that violate the Convention and general international law.

We welcome the 4 October 2018 Report of the Director-General, which describes the work of the Technical Secretariat aimed at fulfilling the various commitments set out in the aforementioned decision, which address matters of priority. We know that the agreements will not be easy to carry out. We do not wish the Organisation to serve as an irrelevant entity when it comes to issues that affect the effectiveness of the integral prohibition of chemical weapons and the use thereof, in any circumstances, by any actor. We call to work toward an effective regime that meets its fundamental objectives in light of real threats.

We are convinced that we will continue to have the opportunity to cooperate in these efforts; we will take on the new areas in chemical disarmament that require our collective attention with enthusiasm.

We request that this statement be considered an official document of this session and published on the Organisation’s website.

Thank you.