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**MOROCCO**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDELOUAHAB BELLOUKI  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO  
TO THE OPCW AT THE EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,

Madam Chairperson, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, on behalf of the Moroccan delegation, for the excellent manner in which you have led our work. I am sure that it will be concluded successfully.

I should also like to express once again to the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Fernando Arias, the full confidence and unwavering support of the Kingdom of Morocco in the exercise of his important responsibilities and the accomplishment of his noble and demanding mission. I should also like to take this opportunity to praise the professionalism, competence, and dedication of the members of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”).

Morocco of course fully aligns itself with the statement of the African Group, which I had the honour to deliver yesterday morning, and with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, delivered yesterday by H.E. Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Morocco once again vigorously reiterates its strong condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances, and for whatever reason. This is an immensely illegal and unjustifiable act. States Parties are thus called upon to redouble their efforts to protect the norm from being eroded, and to work tirelessly to put an end to the use of chemical weapons in the world.

True to its proactive and constructive approach, my country, which is an active player in the fight against impunity, expresses its strong support of the actions of States Parties aimed at providing the Organisation with the necessary and credible tools that will enable it to



determine responsibilities in an impartial and independent manner, on the basis of irrefutable evidence and in a spirit of consensus, all while preserving the unity and technical character of our Organisation.

My delegation is of the view that a mobilising and inclusive instrument must be put in place, one that is based on an equitable geographical representation and that is in keeping with international law and due process, as well as with the fundamental principles of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”).

My delegation was pleased to note the announcement of the verified and complete destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. In this context, my country encourages continuation of the dialogue between that State Party and the Secretariat, to ensure an optimal implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the relevant decisions on this subject, as well as the resolution of all of the outstanding issues that remain unanswered, as noted in the reports of the Declaration Assessment Team.

Morocco welcomes the Secretariat’s efforts aimed at implementing the fourth phase of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Africa Programme”).

In an effort to enhance the benefits of this programme, Morocco would underscore the need to strengthen protective capacities and to improve coordination between all relevant stakeholders at the national and subregional level. In this connection, the enhancement of laboratories’ capacities in terms of human and material resources is crucial to achieving optimal implementation of the Convention. My country encourages all actors to engage in inclusive and constructive dialogue across the Secretariat and the States Parties, as well as in the Africa Programme Steering Committee, in order to better address the specific needs of African States Parties.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasise the appropriateness of a thorough evaluation of the Africa Programme that takes into account the on-the-ground realities of each State Party, which would allow beneficiaries to get the most out of the Programme. In this connection, Morocco calls for more coordination through the Steering Committee for the implementation of the Programme.

In this context, Morocco wishes to reiterate its gratitude for the voluntary contributions to the Africa Programme, but considers nonetheless that its success unquestionably depends on more stable and sustainable financing.

With regard to the fight against chemical terrorism, my country strongly supports the efforts and activities undertaken by the Open-ended Working Group on Terrorism, chaired by Ambassador Oji Ngofa of Nigeria and by the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors chaired by Madam Ambassador Infante of Chile.

In this connection, it should be noted that the use of chemicals as weapons by non-State actors ought to be a constant concern for us all. African States Parties, with the support of the Secretariat, must build the appropriate capacities to deal decisively with such a risk.

Morocco profoundly believes that greater coordination with the National Authorities of African States Parties will strengthen the OPCW’s initiatives to counter the threat of

chemical terrorism. My delegation particularly welcomes the establishment of the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission, as well as the organisation of meetings aimed at promoting coordination among all stakeholders.

Moreover, my delegation hopes that the discussions on the Organisation's road map for the next five years will come to a successful conclusion, with engagement and constructive cooperation from all of us, and with our unwavering support of Ambassador Puja of Indonesia who, with great skill and responsibility, is leading the work of the Working Group for the Preparation of the Fourth Review Conference.

Concerning the universality of the Convention, my delegation welcomes the accession of the State of Palestine, which is a positive development towards the realisation of this objective that must keep us mobilised.

We must also work together tirelessly to protect, at whatever cost, the integrity of our Organisation, and to strengthen the effectiveness of its role in the area of non-proliferation and chemical disarmament.

In order to intensify cooperation among the States Parties of the Sahel subregion and to support efforts aimed at strengthening the capacities of the National Authorities of African countries, the National Authorities of Morocco and Togo engaged in bilateral cooperation within the framework of the 2018 Mentorship/Partnership Programme. The goal is help strengthen the relations between the two authorities, to enhance dialogue, and to exchange good practices in order to achieve the common objectives relating to implementation of the Convention.

To conclude, I should like to announce that the city of Marrakesh will have the privilege of hosting the Eighteenth Annual Workshop to Coordinate Assistance and Protection, which will be held from 29 to 31 October 2018. This exercise will allow States Parties and the Secretariat to interact with a view to gathering input from all regions, in order to come up with recommendations on how to improve assistance and protection programmes. In this connection, my country is prepared to support the efforts of the Secretariat aimed at strengthening subregional capacities for optimal implementation of the provisions of Article X.

I thank you for your attention, and would ask that this statement be considered as an official document of the Eighty-Ninth Session of the Executive Council.

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