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MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AHMAD NAZRI YUSOF
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW AT THE
FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

It is my privilege to congratulate, and welcome His Excellency Ambassador Agustin Vásquez Gómez, the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the OPCW, as Chairperson of the Fourth Review Conference. I am confident that under your able leadership, we will be guided towards constructive outcomes and a successful conference.

My delegation wishes to express our appreciation to the Organisation's Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his comprehensive opening remarks. We would also like to commend H.E. Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia and the Technical Secretariat for their exceptional hard work in ensuring a decent and workable draft provisional text, submitted to the Conference.

Malaysia subscribes to the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China (NAM States Parties and China), yesterday.

The time has come again for us, as States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention") and members of the international community, to reflect and take stock of what we have and have not accomplished over the past five years since the last Review Conference in 2013.

After more than two decades since its inception, we can take pride in the fact that the Convention stands out as a successful model of a multilateral agreement that seeks to eliminate, under international verification, an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, it is regrettable to note that more and more challenges and divisions are emerging among us in our quest to achieve the goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

The success of this Convention could be attributed to the 193 States Parties that believe in its purpose and ultimate goal for a safe and secure world, free of chemical weapons. Against this



backdrop, Malaysia congratulates and is pleased to welcome the State of Palestine as the 193rd State Party to the Convention.

Malaysia believes that for as long as there are States that continue to remain outside the Convention, we will not be able to achieve the full implementation of the Convention. It is our strong desire that the accession of five new States Parties since 2013 would encourage remaining States not Party to the Convention to accede to it without further delay.

Despite the many successes achieved through the Convention, and just when we thought we could begin focusing our attention towards charting the future direction of the Organisation, we have been held back by the unseemly incidents of chemical weapons use, in different parts of the world. These abhorred incidents have disrupted our aspirations in attaining effective implementation of the Convention, as a whole.

In June this year, a watershed decision was passed by the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention. While the decision was adopted through the due process of the Convention, the fact of the matter is, the decision has become a source of great contention and division among States Parties, since the last Review Conference. There were a significant number of States Parties clearly opposed to or had major reservations over this decision.

My delegation views the decision to assign the OPCW with an attribution mandate was, for all intents and purposes, a “rushed job”. We express regret that this decision, which would have significant impacts towards the Convention, was not properly and thoroughly discussed among States Parties but was instead forced through with much unwarranted haste. By providing a new mechanism, the clarity of the Convention in handling cases of non-compliance was replaced by an amorphous mechanism of attribution which had always been under the ambit of the United Nations Security Council.

In consequence, the Organisation we envisioned to unite us all, is becoming more divided and politicised than ever. Taking stock is not just counting on our success, but equally important is to reflect on our failures and weaknesses. Hence, it is our duty, as custodians of this esteemed Organisation and the Convention, to ensure that it will continue to act on the premise of fair, independent and non-discriminatory implementation of every decision; the premise upon which the interests of every State Party is heard and taken into consideration.

Since the adoption of the plan of action on Article VII obligations, considerable progress has been made on its implementation. However, we are all aware of the various challenges preventing States Parties from fully implementing the provisions of the Convention. Hence, we encourage the Technical Secretariat to continue its support programmes for States Parties requiring assistance in their national implementation efforts.

In this regard, Malaysia supports the notion, that to the extent possible, a tailor-made programme be designed to fit the practical needs of individual States Parties or regions. The less advanced States Parties should be adequately equipped to enhance their capacity in responding to chemical weapons threats and chemical incidents.

Malaysia believes that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X and Article XI is essential to achieving the object and purpose of the Convention.

Malaysia also supports the ideas to improve geographical and gender representation within the OPCW. The proposal by Bangladesh for our Organisation to nurture talents from developing States should be given due recognition and support by all States Parties. In this regard, we look forward to continuing discussions on this proposal and hope that it could be materialised in a way that addresses the need for equitable geographical and balanced gender representation within the OPCW, at the earliest possible.

It has been almost six years since the first report of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. Clearly, the ad hoc bodies established in response to this, namely the FFM, DAT and JIM offered opportunities for the international community to reaffirm its commitment to upholding and strengthening the Convention's norms. Nonetheless, the prospect for the complete "chemical disarmament" in Syria remains inconclusive at best. We have spent so much at the expense of the Syrian people, particularly the innocent victims of chemical weapons incidents.

In this regard, we call upon States Parties to seek middle ground to overcome the differences in the Syrian chemical weapons issue to avoid further suffering of the Syrian populace. Malaysia believes that, with sufficient political will, consensus can be reached even in the midst of an intractable conflict.

We, as a collective force, equally own this Organisation and should always feel that we belong to it. For consensus to come about, it is necessary that our strikingly, contrasting views, influence each other and we strive not to allow any particular views to sway over the others.

We should all exert every effort in reaching consensus in the decision-making process to ensure the effective implementation of every decision. Reaching a decision by way of vote, should be the last option.

In concluding, may I request this statement be circulated as an official document and be posted on the OPCW website and external server.

I thank you.

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