



OPCW

Review Conference

Fourth Session
21 – 30 November 2018

RC-4/NAT.64
22 November 2018
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR RAWAN SULAIMAN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE 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,
Your Excellency Mr Director-General,
Your Excellencies heads of delegation,
Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

In my beautiful country of Palestine, we greet people with the words: "As-salamu Alaykum". This demonstrates that the Palestinian people are truly a peace-loving nation, aspiring to a peace that brings justice, rights and freedom, not a peace that legitimises occupation, settlements and destruction.

"As-salamu Alaykum".

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the State of Palestine and myself, to congratulate H.E. Mr Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Ambassador of El Salvador, on his election as Chairperson of this Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are fully confident that, with his wise leadership and his diplomatic abilities and experience, he will steer this important conference towards achieving its desired objectives. From this lectern, we pledge our continuous cooperation with His Excellency's efforts in this regard.

Also, I should like to express my appreciation to H.E. Mr I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of Indonesia and Chairperson of the Working Group for the Preparation of the Fourth Review Conference, whose commendable endeavours over the past few months contributed to a large extent to the successful preparation for this conference and its draft final report.

Likewise, I should like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his informative and comprehensive report to this session, and for his continuous efforts and those of his aides at the Technical Secretariat, aimed at strengthening the active role of the OPCW in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



The delegation of my country associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement that are Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and China, which was delivered by H.E. Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The accession of the State of Palestine to the Chemical Weapons Convention reflects its principled position in the fight against the proliferation of chemical weapons, and its deep belief in the legitimacy of the Convention, based on the equitable implementation of its principles, and the need to keep alive the hope that this Convention becomes an example to be emulated to bolster efforts aimed at the elimination and non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, achieve peace at the regional and international levels, on the basis of justice and equity, and also to recognise the equal rights of all States in achieving peace and security.

Through this Fourth Review Conference, the State of Palestine pledges its commitment to the Convention and to its full implementation, including by contributing to efforts for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction at the regional level, in order to make the Middle East region free of these devastating weapons. My country has ceaselessly called upon the international community to provide the necessary support for this objective, which constitutes a legitimate right of peoples in the region and a fundamental pillar for enhancing regional and international peace and security.

The universality of the Convention is one of the main aspects to be reviewed during this Conference. Achievements in this regard, with the number of States Parties to the Convention now totalling 193 States, representing 98% of the world population, is evidence of its international standing and the large support for its lofty objectives. However, universality will remain incomplete as long as even a single State remains outside the scope of the Convention. Therefore, my country calls upon the States that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention or accede thereto without delay, thereby contributing to international peace and security.

The State of Palestine underlines the important role of training courses and outreach programmes in realising the objectives of the Convention. The treaty highlights the importance of economic and technological development and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. Within this framework, the delegation of my country emphasises the need to make further efforts to implement the requirements of Article XI of the Convention, regarding, in particular, the transfer to developing States of technology, equipment and expertise relevant to chemical industries not prohibited under the Convention.

Within this framework, and since its recent accession to the Convention, the State of Palestine has been fulfilling its obligations under Article VII of the Convention, regarding national implementation measures. We highly appreciate the encouragement and support provided to us to this end by the Technical Secretariat. We are confident that the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW will undertake its role and extend a helping hand to States Parties lacking adequate resources, through the provision of appropriate technical assistance and support to enable these States to fully implement the Convention.

We should like to underscore the need to ensure the equitable geographical distribution and a balanced gender representation in the staffing of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, including the professional level positions. In this respect, we believe that the Junior

Professional Officer Programme constitutes an important step in achieving the equitable geographical distribution. We hope that the Technical Secretariat will develop, as a capacity-building measure, innovative means such as dedicated financial arrangements for the benefit of candidates from developing States Parties in order to facilitate their participation in the Junior Professional Officer Programme.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has achieved enormous successes thanks to the continuing support provided by the States Parties. In this respect, the State of Palestine underlines the importance of future priorities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and commends the work that has been accomplished thus far by the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We look forward to the adoption of a document concerning this matter during the proceedings of this Conference.

In conclusion, we should like to underline the full commitment of the State of Palestine and its cooperation with all other States Parties for the success of this Fourth Review Conference in order to shape an organisation that has the capacity to truly free the world of all chemical weapons.

We request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the OPCW extranet and public website.

--- 0 ---