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CHILE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE 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,

The Fourth Review Conference has begun at a moment at which the States Parties must renew their commitment, not only to a world free of chemical weapons but above all to rebuilding agreements to tackle the fight against the production, possession, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons by various actors and in diverse circumstances. It is upon the foundation of these objectives that we align ourselves with the statement made by the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

We welcome the progress made by the countries whose arsenals of chemical weapons have been destroyed in recent years, as well as the progress made toward that same end. Nevertheless, while stockpiles and facilities are being destroyed in line with the regime of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) in countries that have declared their possession thereof, we have borne witness to recurring signals of the use of chemical weapons or chemicals as weapons. This contradicts the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the subsequent duties that fall upon the shoulders of the States Parties. Article VII of the Convention is not only the source of the attribution of competencies, it is also the foundation of obligations for acting with diligence in the implementation of its standards and carrying these out in line with the principles of the rule of law and with regard to the activities that put the objectives of the Convention at risk and are subject to the jurisdiction of each State Party.

At this time, it is not enough to reiterate the provisions of the Convention prohibiting chemical weapons. For that reason, we will spare no effort to overcome the gaps that we observe in critical areas and with regard to which we believe that the Organisation is engaged in the challenging tasks that we have entrusted to it. We are fully confident that the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) is performing its functions with professionalism and responsibility, guided by objective standards and credible information.

This Fourth Review Conference is taking place within a context that requires redoubling efforts in order to invigorate the effectiveness of norms against the use and re-emergence of chemical weapons. Incidents and allegations continue to take place and, in order to confront them, the tools with which the Organisation operates must be utilised in full. It is concerning



that as we sit before the facts and the results of investigations that have been determined, we are not achieving the consensus necessary to demonstrate that the Organisation keeps abreast of the times.

Consensus is not a vehicle for leaving events to the side while we dedicate ourselves to discussing only comfortable and less demanding matters. The challenges are great, and we want to take them on with diplomacy and in line with international law. The search for full universality cannot stop; we welcome the support offered by the States that have acceded to the Convention in the past five years, moving us forward on this path. Chemical disarmament must have the participation of all States, thus guaranteeing no possession of chemical weapons within the international community.

At this Fourth Review Conference, we recall the issues that were considered at the Third Review Conference; yet it is more urgent to analyse matters that currently demand priority attention.

This year, the Organisation has adopted decisions that call for us to reflect on the efficacy of the standards of prohibition and prevention. These decisions indicate that the risk of the use of chemical weapons remains, and that non-State actors may possess and utilise them. For this reason, we welcome the work of the Organisation to establish a Rapid Response and Assistance Mission, as well as to expand efforts in prevention, considering the legal aspects needed to address the threat of chemical terrorism. Thus, the Organisation can present itself as an institution loyal to its objectives and principles, as well as an effective tool within the system of international peace and security to ensure verifiable chemical disarmament.

Inspired by these concepts, we welcomed the complete document resulting from the skilful leadership of Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia following a review attended by all Member States, which has made it possible to gain a broad appreciation of the matters that the Conference must address. We also recall the useful report on future priorities produced by Ambassadors Bruce Koloane of South Africa and Sabine Nölke of Canada.

We know that verification and the systems set out in the Convention form part of the fundamental bases of this Organisation and, together with assistance and protection, present challenges for the immediate future. The verification system has made it possible to take actions with recognised results, as was demonstrated by the Fact-Finding Mission and others associated with decisions adopted by the United Nations. We also highlight the assessment by the Scientific Advisory Board and the benefit of having its reports and opinions. We wish to continue with the initiative aimed at including central nervous system-acting chemicals and we are examining with interest the proposal to update the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention, in line with paragraph 5 of Article XV. Together with these factors, we support the efforts to examine the personnel policy in line with current demands and the need to retain indispensable capabilities for tasks requiring high levels of qualification.

I will now address two subjects that make a significant contribution to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Convention. One is the project that is currently under way to elevate the OPCW Laboratory to a centre for chemistry and technology. We strongly support this initiative and we trust that the results will be visible and inclusive. For this reason, we join the efforts of some regions to ensure the presence of a designated laboratory at its headquarters, and we applaud the cooperation among the laboratories toward this end. We are committed to continuing to promote this objective.

On another note, my country shares the vision of incorporating the pillar of economic and technological development and subsequent cooperation as one of the centres of gravity of the Convention that gives meaning to the participation of many States Parties. Capacity building, which is an area in which the Organisation is making huge efforts (such as the Africa Programme), implies the mobilisation of ideas, resources, and projects capable of reconciling specific interests with the grand goals of the Convention. We welcome the work of the Advisory Board for Education and Outreach for its excellent performance in the field of action and its support for a better understanding of the role that the Convention plays in today's system.

These efforts are compatible with the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation. For this reason, the States Parties are able to do more to strengthen this pillar and further develop projects and ways of measuring its results with appropriate indicators, together with the Secretariat, in order to respond to the challenge of searching for concrete achievements on a non-discriminatory basis in line with the provisions of Article XI of the Convention.

I would like to add some final words to wish you, Mr Chairperson, and the Director-General, excellent results in the days to come as a genuine expression of multilateral work.

I kindly request that this statement be considered an official document and published on the OPCW website.

Thank you.

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