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PERU

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CARLOS HERRERA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PERU TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson, Ambassador Jana Reinišová,

I would like to begin my statement by reiterating that you have the full support of my delegation as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. We value your high level of professionalism, your diplomatic skills, and the sense of responsibility that you bring to the performance of your important role.

We welcome the complete report presented by the Director-General, and we highlight the dedicated work that the Technical Secretariat is carrying out to strengthen the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as the role of the OPCW in the areas of international security, economic development, and cooperation.

At the same time, my delegation is profoundly concerned about the findings in the final report by the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission regarding the incidents that took place in Douma (Syrian Arab Republic) on 7 April 2018. According to the report, there are reasonable grounds to believe that on this occasion, the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon took place—an event that we vehemently condemn and that we hope will be duly investigated to identify the perpetrators.

For this reason, we consider it vitally important that the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) be established soon, in line with the mandate assigned by the Conference of the States Parties at its Fourth Special Session (paragraph 10 of the decision adopted in June 2018). We have noted the report by the Director-General on the progress made in this process and we are certain that we will soon have a fully functioning Investigation and Identification Team. We reiterate our call to the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with the tasks of this relevant mechanism.

Likewise, we have noted the report by the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) on the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic. We regret that there are still aspects that require clarification and communication with regard to non-declared chemical weapons and the absence of the complete verification of what has been destroyed to date. For this reason, we will continue to reiterate our call to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to provide the information required by the Technical Secretariat to explain the existing discrepancies and gaps with regard to its initial declaration.



Peru is one of the countries that has entered into bilateral agreements with the OPCW for assistance and protection. This is a sign of our commitment to the Organisation in order to provide our full cooperation in the implementation of Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Within this framework, Peru will host a planning meeting for projects on risk and threat assessment for the development of national programmes in September this year. We firmly believe that this meeting will constitute the first step in a successful process that will culminate with the design of national assistance and protection plans, not only in Peru, but in the other countries that require them as well.

I would like to express the support of my delegation for the Chairperson's initiative to establish a facilitation group with the objective of starting a process of consultations on the Organisation's tenure policy. Given the specificity and importance of this matter, we believe it is pertinent to open a dialogue and search for the best possible way to maintain a balance between the principles of the OPCW, knowledge transfer, and preservation of experience.

It is not my intention to prolong the discussion this morning, but I must respond to false statements, specifically a statement directed against Peru on these premises. It was said that the current Peruvian Head of State was not elected by anyone. Mr Martín Vizcarra was elected Vice-President of the Republic, as the running mate of candidate Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, whom he replaced as President via a perfectly constitutional and legal mechanism, which is why absolutely no one contested his investiture either in or outside of the country. The contrast with Venezuela speaks for itself.

On the other side, Peru is more than justified in its concern for the Venezuelan situation beyond our commitment to protect democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. To date, there are more than seven hundred thousand Venezuelan citizens in Peru in search of food, medicine, and a dignified life; they are part of the over three million that constitute the most important migratory phenomenon in our region in recent history. This mobilisation is the product of the humanitarian crisis that has spiralled in Venezuela, which its leaders are determined to deny.

The Lima Group is not aligned, as has been said, with "imperial impositions"; neither does it support any kind of military intervention. To the contrary, the Lima Group is committed to a democratic and peaceful transition process for the Venezuelan people.

Since the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela currently holds the Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement and China and Peru does not recognise the regime of Nicolás Maduro in that country as legitimate, I wish to state that my delegation has suspended its participation in the work of the Non-Aligned Movement and China until a change in the Chairmanship of the Group takes place next October.

In this regard, I must also inform that Peru has sent a note verbale to the Director-General of the OPCW stating that the participation of the Peruvian delegation in the Organisation's various meetings, both official and informal, does not tacitly imply recognition of the legitimacy of the current constituents of the Permanent Representation of Venezuela to the OPCW as representatives of the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro.

I would like to kindly request, Madam Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

Thank you.

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