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## **GUATEMALA**

### **STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR GLADYS MARITHZA RUÍZ SÁNCHEZ DE VIELMAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

Please allow me to express what an honour it is for Guatemala to see you at the head of this Council. The post that you have undertaken is fundamental for coordinating the work that we must carry out in chemical disarmament. We guarantee that you have the full cooperation of this delegation to ensure that under your guidance, the work sessions of this Council will bear fruitful results.

Likewise, we welcome the reports of the Director-General and my colleagues on the Bureau, as well as the work carried out by the facilitators and the Technical Secretariat of this Organisation.

We have a common goal: guaranteeing international peace and security. This is a commitment and an obligation to humanity. The terror and suffering caused by the use of chemical weapons is deplorable and serves as the motive for the States Parties of this Organisation to take decisions aimed at disarmament, prevention, and development—principles that are underscored in the preamble of the Convention that we are committed to defending and implementing.

In terms of disarmament, we are close to eliminating the entirety of declared chemical weapons. When this goal has been achieved, it will be a milestone for posterity. In this sense, Guatemala remains vigilant to ensure that they will be destroyed by the established deadline. Regrettably, this does not mean that the world is free from chemical weapons. The way the global environment is evolving in the face of re-emergence does not seem encouraging. Last year, we learned that chemical weapons were being used again—events that are flagrant violations of the Convention. In response to these incidents, the Conference of the States Parties took the decision to establish a team to investigate these incidents (the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT)). During the intersessional period, we were informed by the Director of the Team's establishment and its working methodology, particularly for the incidents investigated by the Fact-Finding Mission. In this regard, Guatemala urges the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with the IIT. Likewise, we call for continued constructive cooperation with the Technical Secretariat in tackling outstanding matters within this Organisation, particularly those referred to the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT).



Prevention, Mr Chairperson, also means being responsible in what one does, in what one does for good. In other words, that means the responsible use of chemistry for the benefit of humankind. Prevention is key in generating and sustaining peace. In order to do this, we must have an Organisation that is strong and capable of confronting today's challenges, as well as those of the future.

In this regard, I would refer to the very important task this Council has assigned to Their Excellencies Mr I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of Indonesia, and Mr Agustín Vázquez Gómez, Ambassador of El Salvador. During their facilitation, various important matters were identified for discussion aimed at structurally strengthening this Organisation—specifically within human resources—as were the interests and needs of the States Parties, particularly those represented by the Non-Aligned Movement and China. The latter refer to matters from the Fourth Review Conference that we must circle back to, as they are essential when it comes to promoting best practices in the peaceful use of chemistry. These also include improving customs control, developing action protocols for responding to chemical accidents, and environmental sustainability and protection, among others. It is important that these issues remain visible to ensure that they are addressed during the work sessions of this Organisation.

There are future challenges, and it is for that reason that within this Organisation, in which all of the States Parties work equally, we must be constructive and work together to achieve concrete results and guarantee peace for the lives of the people to whom we are dedicated. Guatemala is committed to working collaboratively with all States Parties and promoting the achievement of one key outcome: *a world free of chemical weapons*.

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