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**Statement by  
Ambassador Venu Rajamony,  
Permanent Representative of India to the OPCW  
at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Executive Council  
08<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Mr. Director General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Mr. Chairperson,

I take this opportunity to welcome you back and to this Session as the Chair of the Executive Council. I am sure States Parties present will agree that you displayed great diplomatic sagacity and leadership during the 91<sup>st</sup> Session and have been an important and useful interlocutor trying to evolve a consensus amongst States on important issues in the intersessional period. I am confident that this Session will be smooth and successful under your able leadership. I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation during this session and your entire tenure.

I thank the Director General for his comprehensive statement, as well as the Vice-Chairs for their reports on the activities conducted under their respective clusters of issues.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of NAM States Parties to the CWC and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

This Session begins with good news. We understand that after many rounds of disagreement, there is finally movement towards consensus on proposals for additions to Schedule 1A of the Annex on Chemicals of the CWC. My delegation appreciates the flexibility shown by the sponsors of different proposals and hopes that the required amendments will be passed during the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties in November 2019. This is an important step towards addressing the new challenges that are emerging in an ever-changing global environment and ensuring that the goals of the Convention are met.

In this regard, my delegation shares the concern over allegations and incidents of use of chemical weapons, including by non-state actors, especially terrorist groups, in different parts of the world. Any use of chemical weapons is in complete disregard of humanity, and is reprehensible and contrary to the provisions of the Convention, as well as accepted international legal norms. All investigations of alleged use of chemical weapons should be conducted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. At the same time, States Parties should strongly resolve to undertake appropriate measures to combat use or threat of use of chemical weapons by non-state actors.

Mr. Chairperson,

India continues to urge and call upon the remaining States that are not Parties to the Convention, to consider acceding to the Convention at the earliest, with the hope that all remaining declared chemical weapons stockpiles will soon be destroyed.

Mr. Chairperson,

We look forward to early resolution of all outstanding issues pertaining to the Syria Chemical Dossier and urge the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic to continue consultations in this regard.

There is a continuing stalemate on the issue of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) within the EC and amongst States Parties to the Convention. The IIT must at all times remain accountable to the EC and function in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. There is merit in exploring ways to ensure that concerns on the IIT shared by a large number of States Parties are addressed and the principles of the Convention are upheld. Let me reiterate the need for States Parties to engage in a constructive dialogue on this issue and strive to find common ground.

Mr. Chairperson,

My delegation takes note of the fact that the Technical Secretariat has presented an Omnibus Programme and Budget for the year 2020 which defers from past practice. There is concern that such an Omnibus Budget may deprive States Parties of an opportunity to comment on specific elements of the Budget. It is our view that States Parties should continue consultations on the matter and strive for a common ground, which would enable them to discuss elements of budget individually, while the OPCW operating and investment requirements are met.

Mr. Chairperson,

My delegation welcomes the effort of the Chairperson to address issues which are of core concern, in a non-discriminatory and effective manner. We hope there will be simultaneous and substantial progress on all topics under consideration with a view to strengthening the Convention and its effective implementation. My delegation also applauds the tireless efforts of the Co-facilitators, Ambassador of Indonesia, I Gusti A. Wesaka Puja and Ambassador of El Salvador, Agustín Vásquez Gómez in this regard.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have been witnessing many differences in the Council. Sessions have ended without adoption of Reports and many Decisions have been taken by vote rather than by consensus.

India has always emphasized the importance of consensus and the need for all decisions to be taken by the States Parties in consultation with each other. We urge States Parties to come together and constantly strive for consultation, cooperation and consensus. India remains willing and open for all discussions with

States Parties to find ways and means to strengthen the Convention and its effective implementation, within the framework of the Convention.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, I request that this Statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the OPCW's public website.

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