

(Please check against delivery)

**Statement by Ambassador Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa, Permanent Representative
of Nepal to the OPCW at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the
States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention**

(The Hague, 25-29 November 2019)

**Mr. Chairperson
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, let me congratulate you Mr. Chairperson on your election as the Chair of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in discharging your important responsibilities.

I would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Twenty-Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties Ambassador Yun-Young Lee of the Republic of Korea for all his excellent works during the Twenty-Third Session.

My delegation also thanks the Director-General His Excellency Fernando Arias for his comprehensive statement covering the Organisation's recent achievements, persistent challenges and future priorities.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Azerbaijan on behalf of the NAM State Parties to OPCW and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

As a State party to NPT, CWC and BWC, as well as being the host to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for the Asia-Pacific (UNRCPD),

Nepal attaches great importance to disarmament and non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons.

Nepal strongly believes that the universal peace and security can be guaranteed and ensured only with the time-bound, general and complete disarmament of weapons of mass destruction including chemical weapons.

Nepal is resolute and strongly committed to world peace, international security and disarmament.

Our commitment to and faith in the norms and values of world peace are also enshrined in the Constitution of Nepal as they remain one of the fundamental guiding principles of Nepal's

foreign policy.

Mr. Chairperson,

CWC is, no doubt, one of the most successful instruments in the existing disarmament regime.

As an important, unique and non-discriminatory international disarmament instrument, it has set the legal norms towards eliminating an entire category of chemical weapons and has provided a multilateral framework of international cooperation and assistance for the promotion of the peaceful uses of chemistry.

Nepal is strongly in favour of universality as well as full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention.

Both the universality and effective implementation of the Convention are absolutely crucial for achieving international peace, security and development.

To this end, we wish to join other state parties to call upon the states, which are yet to sign or ratify the CWC to join the Convention at an early date.

Mr. Chairperson,

While we note with satisfaction the progress we have achieved so far towards the destruction and elimination of chemical weapons, we are concerned over the alleged use and threat of use of chemical weapons by both state and non state actors.

I wish to reiterate Nepal's principled position that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons by whoever, wherever and whatever reasons is deplorable.

And, it is contrary to the provisions of the Convention, legal norms and standards of the international community.

We reaffirm that the use of chemical weapons should be investigated and perpetrators should be held accountable.

Meanwhile, we believe that strict adherence to the provisions of the Convention as well as finding a proper balance between its pillars are necessary to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and threat of their use.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nepal always stresses upon the need to forge cooperation, collaboration, consensus and constructive engagement among the States Parties which are so crucial for attaining the lofty goal, that is the goal to make the world free of chemical weapons, as envisaged by the CWC.

On this score, Nepal welcomes and supports the Joint Proposal by the US, Canada and the Netherlands and the modified proposal by the Russian Federation which seek to add new families of the chemicals to Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nepal appreciates OPCW's continued efforts to make CWC a universal instrument for the elimination of Chemical Weapons from the world by making the Convention comprehensive, non-discriminatory, and verifiable.

Nepal is always committed in working closely with the Technical Secretariat to fulfil its mandate of peaceful uses of chemistry.

We are looking forward to increased efforts by the Technical Secretariat on the exchange of scientific and technical information, on strengthening of the chemical analytical skills, on enhancing technical competence of chemical laboratories, and on increasing overall technical capabilities of the countries like Nepal.

We have put our best efforts for full and sincere implementation of the Convention at the national level.

To this end, we wish to engage more constructively with the Technical Secretariat in building and enhancing our capacity in the days to come.

I request that this Statement be considered as an official document of this Conference and posted on the OPCW website and extranet.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.