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ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Ambassador Krassimir Kostov,

On behalf of the delegation of Argentina, I congratulate you on your appointment at the helm of this new session of the Conference of the States Parties of the OPCW; we put ourselves fully at your disposal.

We welcome the participation of the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and we reiterate to him our full confidence in his management of the Technical Secretariat. We extend our greetings to the Vice-Chairpersons and the other authorities of the Conference.

We reaffirm the commitment of the Argentine Republic to the policies of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as to cooperation in that area, which guarantees the sovereign right to research and development of technologies for peaceful purposes, in alignment with international commitments and domestic legislation.

We reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance is unacceptable and constitutes a flagrant violation of the international obligations set out in the Chemical Weapons Convention and international law. All those who are responsible for their use must be held accountable.

We call upon all States Parties to develop all of the pillars of the Convention and to strictly comply with the Convention and the decisions of the Organisation, in such a way so as to ensure that the fundamental objectives of both are realised. We reiterate the importance of advocating for the universality of the Convention. We also call for the continued strengthening of the mechanisms of cooperation with other multilateral bodies.

We highlight the work of the OPCW with the Syrian Arab Republic, mindful of the information provided by the Director-General in his detailed report, and we call for continued efforts aimed at clarifying unresolved matters within the framework of the Structured Dialogue.

We regret that following intensive negotiations and efforts to come to an agreement on relevant issues related to the implementation of the Convention, it was not possible to reach a consensus on a final report for the Fourth Review Conference. Nevertheless, we note that a broad consensus on the contribution that the OPCW could make in the fight against chemical



terrorism was indeed indicated at the Fourth Review Conference. In this regard, the Organisation has an important role to play to assist States in developing their capacities.

We believe that the facilitation mechanism is a useful tool for making progress on the courses of action to take in relation to matters of relevance to the Organisation and the States Parties. For this reason, we welcome the latest advances made with a view to a commitment that will help revitalise the facilitation framework, improve the coordination thereof, and address the matters that the States Parties understand require progress, in an effective and non-discriminatory manner. In this regard, we value the efforts of the Chairperson of the Executive Council and the co-facilitators nominated at the Ninetieth Session.

We find it timely and convenient to update Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention in order to ensure that these chemicals are subject to the verification mechanisms set out in Article VI of the Convention. Furthermore, the inclusion of chemicals on the Schedules will also make it possible to have in place mechanisms for consultations and cooperation (under Article IX), assistance and cooperation (under Article X), remediation, and ultimately sanctions (under Article XII) as set out in the Convention in the event of any incidents involving said chemicals. In this regard, we welcome the modified proposal from the Russian Federation and the proposal from Canada, the United States, and the Netherlands, and we hope both are adopted by consensus.

With regard to the OPCW Programme and Budget for 2020, we reiterate that it should adequately, and in a balanced manner, finance the activities related to the main pillars of the Organisation. In this regard, we reaffirm the importance of encouraging the adoption of decisions by consensus in relation to the budget in order to facilitate its subsequent implementation. Without prejudice thereto, we also understand that it is imperative to provide the Organisation with a budget that will allow it to function regularly and meet its objectives.

We reaffirm the interest of the Argentine Republic in playing a constructive role by submitting proposals for more effective and efficient mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention. One example of this is the preliminary talks that have been under way this year within the framework of the industry cluster and based on the proposal that we submitted with a view to optimise the implementation of the methodology used to select chemical industries in compliance with Article VI of the Convention, bearing in mind both the objective of reliable verification and efficiency in allocating the Organisation's resources. In this regard, the delegation of Argentina welcomes the progress that has been achieved in improving the frequency of site inspections and inspections of other chemical production facilities.

The Argentine Republic has been determined to play an active role in this Organisation since its establishment, and to promote the development of the Convention and all of its pillars. We are pleased to note some recent examples from the past year that reflect this position. Argentina's National Authority is engaged in intensive efforts to promote the Convention in industry and academia. Jointly with the OPCW, it regularly organises regional assistance and protection workshops for chemical emergencies, in addition to a regional course on chemical security and protection in laboratories. Between 17 and 19 September, we hosted the subregional meeting on the implementation of the Convention and cooperation in Latin America; from 2 to 6 December we will be organising a regional workshop on chemical security and protection at laboratories with the National Institute of Industrial Technology and the OPCW. Other examples include participation of the Institute of Scientific and

Technical Research for Defense in the training program for the twentieth associate programme, as well as the participation of an Argentinian enterprise in the industry module of said programme. Argentina is very proud of its men and women who have dedicated their work to chemical disarmament. For this reason, we are pleased to welcome Doctor Elma Biscotti to the OPCW Scientific Advisory Board starting next year.

In conclusion, the delegation of Argentina wishes to underscore the importance of prioritising dialogue and the search for consensus in order to ensure that the OPCW will be able to achieve its top objectives. We speak in favour of ensuring that our Organisation is prepared to continue its work and confront both present and future challenges stemming from the international arena and its increasing complexity.

We request that this statement be considered an official document and published on the external server and webpage of the OPCW.

Thank you.

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