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GHANA

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NATIONAL AUTHORITY COORDINATOR FOR THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS
CONVENTION AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairman,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to join previous speakers to welcome H.E. Ambassador Krassimir Kostov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria, as Chairperson of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. My delegation would like to commend you for the able manner you have conducted this meeting so far. We assure you of our support in steering the deliberations of this session to a successful conclusion.

May I also express appreciation to the Chairperson of the Twenty-Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties, H.E. Ambassador Yun-Young Lee of the Republic of Korea for his dedicated efforts during that session. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

My delegation further extends appreciation to the Director-General of OPCW, H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his comprehensive report and to reassure him of our confidence in his leadership and efforts towards strengthening the Organisation. Additionally, we wish to acknowledge the contribution of the Technical Secretariat as well as all focal points, facilitators, and their working groups for working tirelessly towards the advancement of the work of OPCW.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement and China and the African States Parties to the Convention. In my national capacity, I wish to stress that Ghana remains committed to the realisation of the noble goals and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Ghana notes with appreciation the various efforts being made by the Organisation towards the attainment of a world free of chemical weapons. In this regard, the near Universality of the membership of the Organisation, the verifiable destruction of 97% of all the declared



stockpiles of chemical weapons, among other gains, maintain the norm for global disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons.

In commending these efforts being made by the Organisation, however, my delegation is not oblivious of the fact that the OPCW is still faced with some challenges such as the reluctance by a few remaining States to accede to the Convention, the deployment of chemical weapons on civilians allegedly by both state and non-state actors, as well as the threat of the re-emergence and misuse of toxic chemicals.

Ghana condemns and opposes the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, and under any circumstances. It is the responsibility of all States Parties to work collectively to hold perpetrators accountable in order to end the culture of impunity.

Ghana is of the view that it is by dialogue and engagement by all States Parties and with all relevant stakeholders that our Organisation can address its challenges effectively and progressively. In this vein, my delegation welcomes the compromise reached on the joint proposal by the USA, Canada, and the Netherlands and the proposal by the Russian Federation to update Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals to make the Convention responsive to emerging threats of toxic chemicals. It is our expectation that these proposals will be adopted by consensus.

My delegation in the same manner commend the Chairman and the entire Executive Council for considering the NAM-China proposal to establish an Open-Ended Working Group to identify and implement issues on which consensus could be achieved amongst States Parties.

Ghana also calls for the continuous and effective implementation of Article XI for the promotion of economic and technological development in areas not prohibited under the Convention. Equally essential is the need for the Organisation to continue to offer relevant assistance and technical support to States Parties to enhance their national implementation measures. In this regard, Ghana applauds OPCW and the Governments of the United Kingdom and Switzerland for providing the logistics and expertise needed by Ghana to host the Regional Basic Course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons for First Responders of ECOWAS Member States which was held in Accra in August 2019.

Given such capacity building programmes, Ghana will continue to work towards meeting her obligations under the Convention. In the recent past, with the support of relevant stakeholders, we have been able to review our draft legislation with the view to domesticating the Convention in order to ensure its effective implementation and compliance by all stakeholders at the national level.

Furthermore, Ghana welcomes the continuation of the fifth phase of the African Programme and calls on all States Parties to offer their support towards the success of the initiative, since this will enhance the capacity of African States Parties to play their expected roles towards the achievement of the object and purpose of the Convention. My delegation accordingly supports calls for the establishment of a designated OPCW Laboratory on the African continent to further enhance technology and capacity-building for effective implementation of the Convention.

The smooth implementation of the programmes, activities, and projects of OPCW requires the continuous financial support of all States Parties. In this regard, my delegation calls on all

States Parties to ensure the timely payment of our assessed contributions and in full. Ghana wishes to thank all States Parties that have made voluntary contributions to fund the various projects of the Organisation and call on others who are capable to do same.

In conclusion, Mr Chairman, I wish to reiterate that, the work of the Organisation should be guided by engagement, dialogue, and cooperation among States Parties, such that, with their continuous and concerted efforts, the full implementation of the Convention could be realised for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I thank you for your attention.

I kindly request that this statement be considered as an official document of this Conference and posted on the website and the external server of OPCW.

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