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ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY MR RAMIRO HIDALGO, ALTERNATE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW AT THE
NINETY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Ambassador Perugini,

On behalf of the delegation of Argentina, I welcome your leadership at this new session of the Executive Council (“the Council”). Without a doubt, your recognised abilities and mastery of the diplomatic arts serve as an invaluable support for this Council.

We welcome the detailed information provided by the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and by the Vice-Chairpersons. We reiterate to the Director-General our sincere appreciation and support for his leadership, and we extend that appreciation to the Technical Secretariat and those who have collaborated on the work of this Organisation.

We reaffirm the commitment of the Argentine Republic to the policies of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as cooperation in those areas, which guarantee the sovereign right to the research and development of technology for peaceful purposes in accordance with international commitments and domestic legislation.

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

We confirm that the Fourth Review Conference has indicated that there is a broad consensus on the contribution that the OPCW can make in the fight against chemical terrorism. In this regard, the Organisation has an important role to play in order to assist the States in capacity-building efforts.

We call upon all States Parties to develop the Convention and all of its pillars, and to comply strictly with the Convention and the decisions of the Organisation in such a way so as to ensure the implementation of the fundamental goals of both. We reiterate the importance of achieving universality of the Convention, and we encourage the continued strengthening of mechanisms of cooperation with other multilateral bodies.

We highlight the work of the OPCW with Syrian Arab Republic, and are carefully following the details provided by the Director-General in his report. We call for continued efforts aimed at clarifying all outstanding matters within the framework of the Structured Dialogue.



In terms of the OPCW Programme and Budget for 2020, we contend that the Organisation must be adequately financed, and that the activities related to the main principles of the Organisation should be equally financed. In this regard, we reaffirm once again the importance of encouraging and achieving decisions on the budget via a consensus 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 normally and meet its objectives. On the other hand, it stands to note that given the extension of the activities that are currently financed by special funds, we must ensure that the central activities that the Organisation is carrying out are primarily financed from the regular budget.

We believe that the mechanism of facilitators is a useful tool for making progress in the assessment, proposal, and consensus on courses of action on issues relevant to the Organisation and the States Parties. In this regard, we value the work carried out by the Chairperson of the Council and his proposal to revitalise the facilitation framework, improve the coordination thereof, and address the issues where the States Parties understand progress is needed, in an effective and non-discriminatory manner. Furthermore, better coordination would prevent duplications. We believe it is necessary to move forward on the discussion of highly relevant matters, such as: capacity building for the integral implementation of the Convention within the framework of Article VII; strengthening capacities against chemical weapons and chemical accidents within the framework of Article X; cooperation with regard to laboratories and for the economic and technological development of States Parties within the framework of Article XI; human resources and the tenure policy, while duly accounting for the need to achieve gender parity and an adequate geographical representation across all levels of the Organisation.

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 since this past May 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 weapons 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 and our participation in the activities that are organised by the OPCW. 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 security management and chemical 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 security management and chemical protection at laboratories with the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI) and the OPCW; this workshop will also take place in Buenos Aires. Other examples include participation of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Research for Defense (CITEDEF) 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 as at 1 January 2020.

As a final observation on the matter, it stands to note that Argentina intends to continue dedicating efforts to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention, particularly with regard to national capacity building by carrying out regional workshops for Latin America and the Caribbean on a variety of subjects.

Our delegation offers constructive support for the work of the Executive Council, with the desire to give priority to dialogue and the search for a consensus in order to ensure that the OPCW is 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 of this session and published on the OPCW's website and external server.

Thank you.

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