

24<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES  
FIJI'S STATEMENT BY THE HEAD OF THE FIJIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY  
FOR THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

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The Chairperson of the 24th Session of the Conference of States Parties,  
Director General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed an honor and privilege for me, on behalf of the Fijian Government and the people of the Republic of Fiji, to be given the opportunity to address the Conference.

As I join other States Parties, please allow me, Your Excellency, Krassimir Kostov, Ambassador of Bulgaria to congratulate you on your election as the Chairperson of the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of States Parties. We are confident that your experience and able leadership will successfully drive the proceedings and success of this Conference.

I wish to also take this opportunity to acknowledge the effort of the Chairperson of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Conference, Ambassador Yun-young Lee of the Republic of Korea in the positive deliberations.

In addition, Fiji aligns itself with the statement delivered by the H.E Jafar Huseynzada of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

Mr Chairperson,

Fiji, a small island state in the South Pacific Region, remains a strong advocate of the Chemical Weapons Convention, we can agree, that this is a critical element of the disarmament and non-proliferation set up.

In the cause of global peace and security, today, Fiji also joins other States in condemning the use of chemical *weapons on innocent civilians* is unacceptable to say the least. Particularly instances of chemical weapons use in Syria, in Iraq, in Malaysia and in the United Kingdom.

This attests to Fiji's participation in the Special Session of the Conference of States Parties in June 2018 and supported the endeavors of the British Government and its diplomatic coalition members. Fiji supported the aim to reinforce the global norms against chemical weapons and advocate for practical steps to address chemical weapons use and strengthen compliance. This includes the decisions that had been adopted accordingly.

Mr Chairperson,

It is therefore now critical that **all** States Parties demonstrate their commitment to strengthening the Convention, the OPCW and its principles. We need to do this through constructive engagements!

In saying this, Fiji is committed to work closely with the Technical Secretariat on implementation support for small island States in the Pacific Region.

Like other developing countries, Fiji is fully aware of the importance of establishing partnership with regional and sub-regional States Parties; especially in areas of information sharing and common interests that could assist States Parties in the full implementation of the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

In August this year, Fiji co-hosted the Regional Workshop on Chemical Emergency Response, Planning and Management. The meeting outcomes included the formation of a regional mechanism to mitigate such challenges. I wish to assure this conference that Fiji is pursuing this action agenda with the Pacific Island Forum.

Mr Chairperson,

Fiji reiterates its full support to the Director General and the Secretariat for the OPCW for its deeds to fulfill the aspirations and obligations of the Convention and ensuring a world free of chemical weapons.

In order to realize such an objective, Fiji supports the adoption of the 2020 OPCW Budget.

Mr Chairperson,

I plea to all of us present here today to reaffirm our commitment to upholding the global ban against any use of chemical weapons and pledge our collective and practical support for the OPCW in its work to help prevent chemical weapons use.

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation wishes you and all the distinguished delegates a successful Session and hereby request that this statement be circulated as an official statement of this Conference.

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