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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR HISSA ABDULLA ALOTAIBA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF
THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Excellency the Chairperson of the Conference,
Excellency the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical
Weapons,
Excellencies heads of attending delegations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I am pleased to congratulate you, Excellency Mr Krassimir Kostov, Ambassador of Bulgaria, on your election as Chairperson of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. I am fully confident that your expertise with the OPCW's work and the issues it handles will enable you to discharge your mission in the best manner and we wish you every success. We would also like to congratulate the Vice-Chairpersons.

We take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Chairperson of the Twenty-Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties, H.E. Mr Yun-young Lee, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, for his dedicated efforts during the Twenty-Third Session. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Fernando Arias, for his ongoing efforts to strengthen the role of the OPCW at various levels.

We would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Working Group for the Preparation of this Conference and his team members.

We would like to thank as well the OPCW Technical Secretariat, the Scientific Advisory Board, the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach and the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters for their important reports and for the recommendations submitted in preparation for this Conference.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its commitment to implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention and achieving the objectives of the OPCW. It expresses its concern about the increasing use of chemical weapons and affirms that the use of chemical weapons and chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances is reprehensible



and completely runs counter the Chemical Weapons Convention and international law provisions. In this regard, it emphasises the need for legal accountability.

We note the importance of the decision adopted by the Fourth Special Session on addressing the threat from chemical weapons use, and we support the efforts of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) established in implementation of that decision. We also support the work of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the complete destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles in some States under OPCW supervision. It reaffirms that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons is the main pillar of the Convention and should be completed in the shortest time possible. It is worth noting that 97% of declared chemical weapons have been destroyed to date. This proves the credibility and effectiveness of the Convention, as illustrated by the successful implementation of the verification regime. The OPCW should continue to pursue its objectives by focusing on preventing the re-emergence of weapons and their use by anyone and at any time.

The United Arab Emirates emphasises the importance of the OPCW's contribution to combating chemical terrorism and commends the efforts of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and its Sub-Working Group on the Use of Chemical Weapons by Non-State Actors. We emphasise the importance of assistance and protection against chemical weapons programmes.

We reaffirm the need to strengthen the capabilities of the Technical Secretariat to respond to the requests for assistance under Article X of the Convention and we support the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission and capacity-building programmes to promote the efforts of combatting chemical terrorism.

The United Arab Emirates encourages the strengthening of international cooperation and exchange of knowledge in the peaceful uses of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under the Convention as a prerequisite for achieving the objectives of the Convention.

We emphasise that international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention is a pillar of OPCW work and is becoming increasingly important for the future priorities of the States Parties and their contribution to economic and technological development.

The United Arab Emirates underlines the high importance of full and effective implementation of all Article XI provisions and affirms that efforts in economic and technological development of States Parties should be intensified and accelerated.

The United Arab Emirates asserts that keeping abreast of scientific and technological developments will ensure the effective implementation of the Convention and enable the OPCW to respond to future challenges. It highlights the relevance of reviewing the Schedules of Chemicals in order to keep up with developments. The United Arab Emirates welcomes the proposals to introduce technical changes to the Annex on Chemicals and supports the proposal to amend Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the proposal to upgrade the current OPCW Laboratory to a Centre for Chemistry and Technology, with a view to fostering the OPCW scientific and technological capabilities in responding to the threat of chemical weapons and promoting

capacity-building of States Parties. To this effect, we encourage States Parties to lend their support to the establishment of this Centre, thereby ensuring its ownership by all of them. The United Arab Emirates expresses its intention to contribute to the Centre.

The Chemical Weapons Convention has advanced confidently and firmly towards universality, with 193 States Parties. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat to encourage the remaining States not Party to the Convention to accede to it.

We urge the remaining States not Party to the Convention to ratify or accede to it at the earliest, with a view to fostering global peace and security.

The United Arab Emirates commends the OPCW Technical Secretariat's efforts to promote engagement and cooperation with the International Council of Chemical Associations, international organisations and the relevant scientific community with a view to implementing Convention and achieving its objectives. We recognise the efforts made by the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach and underline its substantial contribution to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

In accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the United Arab Emirates has enacted legislation and adopted measures for chemical security management and the prevention of chemical incidents and possible misuse of toxic chemicals, including the threat of terrorism. The United Arab Emirates is committed to enhancing chemical safety and security and promoting peaceful uses of related technologies.

In 2013, the United Arab Emirates established the Rabdan Academy, a world-class educational institution, to promote education in the areas of safety, security, defence, emergency preparedness and crisis management. The United Arab Emirates stands ready to cooperate with States Parties and the OPCW in this field.

The United Arab Emirates is committed to cooperating with the OPCW in achieving the objectives of the Convention, implementing assistance programmes and providing protection against chemical weapons by hosting and organising training courses and discussion panels.

The United Arab Emirates reiterates its commitment to the OPCW as well as to the fulfilment of its obligations under the Convention in the interest of promoting international peace and security.

In conclusion, it is our hope that the deliberations of this Conference will contribute to further progress in the active implementation of the Convention.

We request that this statement be considered as an official document of the Conference.

Thank you Mr Chairperson.