



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Fourth Session
25 – 29 November 2019

C-24/NAT.43
27 November 2019
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

MEXICO

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOSÉ ANTONIO ZABALGOITIA TREJO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, distinguished representatives, delegates,

The delegation of Mexico congratulates Ambassador Krassimir Kostov on his election as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and expresses its full support as he carries out his duties. We also express our gratitude to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, for the achievements noted in his report on the activities carried out by the Organisation and the status of the implementation of the Convention.

Mexico is convinced that until we achieve the complete destruction of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, and as long as the production and proliferation of these weapons continues to be a possibility, we will not achieve international peace and security. Through its efforts to build peace and ensure its sustainability, my country has continuously encouraged strengthening both multilateralism and actions to eradicate these types of weapons, as well as preventing the illegal trafficking of conventional weapons, which affects the coexistence of societies and causes thousands of victims.

Mexico believes that a firm commitment to multilateralism and behaviour based on international law should be the common denominator for all States Parties to strengthen—unequivocally—the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. For this reason, Mexico applauds all States Parties for having facilitated the establishment of a mechanism that will make it possible to make substantial progress in the application of our framework of standards.

The universal objective of a world free of chemical weapons, in which economic progress is promoted through the peaceful use of chemistry, can only be achieved if all States in the international community are party to the Convention. Therefore, we urge absent States to accede to this universal commitment in order to achieve and sustain a safe and peaceful world. In this regard, we call upon the United States to accelerate the destruction of its remaining chemical weapons; we call upon Japan to continue to fulfil its responsibility to detect and destroy the abandoned weapons in China; and we call upon Syria to strengthen the Structured Dialogue and clarify the unresolved issues related to its initial declaration. We are pleased that these three delegations have progressed in this regard while addressing this Conference.



It stands to recall that the Chemical Weapons Convention is the first treaty that not only prohibits, but has been successful in nearly eliminating the entirety of a complete category of weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, as we face dynamic evolution in science and technology, it is crucial that we reach agreements by consensus at the Headquarters of the Organisation. One example of this common response are the technical modifications being made to Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals to the convention proposed by the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands, as well as by the Russian Federation. Mexico will join the consensus to have both proposals adopted by this Conference.

Looking back twenty-two years ago since this instrument of disarmament entered into force, we then hoped to celebrate the fact that chemical weapons would be nothing but a mere remnant of the past. Unfortunately, the reality of the matter is otherwise: human tragedies caused by chemical weapons continue to take place, and we have not been able to prevent the recurrence of the use of this type of weapon. The Government of Mexico reiterates its strongest possible condemnation of the use of chemical weapons anytime, by anyone, and under any circumstances. The use of these weapons constitutes a violation of humanitarian law, international law, human rights, and the very Convention itself.

The Government of Mexico believes that control over chemical weapons should be strengthened, as should be the structures for the investigation and identification of those guilty—the materials, promoters, or intellectuals—of their criminal use. As a result, Mexico awaits the reports by the Fact-Finding Mission and the Investigation and Identification Team, and is confident that the investigations have been conducted in strict accordance with the high standards of our Organisation and are aimed at meeting the objectives set out in its mandate. We understand that the work continues and that the final report will support valuable elements for determining responsibilities.

Mexico has made exceptional efforts and internal financial adjustments with the aim of supporting the Organisation's draft Programme and Budget for the year 2020, which was submitted by the Executive Council to this Conference of the States Parties. We believe that the OPCW must continue to function with the highest standards for qualifications, staff, efficiency, and effectiveness; hence, it is necessary and fundamental to utilise the 2017 cash surplus to achieve the objectives of the Convention and, above all, to ensure that the Director-General, the Technical Secretariat, the inspectors, and the Investigation and Identification Team will be able to fully carry out the mandate assigned to them by the Conference of the States Parties.

In terms of international cooperation, Mexico calls upon all States Parties to the Convention and all actors engaged in the chemical field to focus more on taking action rather than politics, more on agreements than on divisions. Global efforts should be focused on key, priority situations, such as impeding the dual use of chemicals via a regime of international control over imports and exports. This regime should be based on legally binding commitments that prevent proliferation in line with the provisions set out in Security Council resolution 1540.

The Government of Mexico values international cooperation via education and the participation of non-governmental organisations toward preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. In providing its experience, points of view, and knowledge, civil society contributes to increased accountability and transparency in discussions on disarmament.

Mexico hopes that the Secretariat's activities in assistance and protection will continue to boost the abilities of the States Parties to respond promptly and properly to chemical accidents or incidents. Likewise, my country also hopes that international cooperation will expand with the only condition that chemistry will be dedicated to peaceful purposes in support of the economic development of States Parties. Latin America and the Caribbean are already working on a project in international cooperation that we hope the Technical Secretariat will be able to support with the nomination of a coordinator who will provide follow-up on this endeavour.

Finally, my delegation extends its gratitude to the Technical Secretariat for having supported Mexico's participation in various courses and workshops held in Latin America and the Caribbean and other parts of the world, and for supporting my country in organising the Twentieth Regional Meeting of National Authorities and the training course on assistance and protection for Latin America and the Caribbean, both held in Mexico City this past year.

I kindly request that this statement be considered a public and official document of this session and published on the official OPCW website.

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