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KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ABDELOUAHAB BELLOUKI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
KINGDOM OF MOROCCO TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,

Allow me to begin by reiterating my support for Ambassador Andrea Perugini of Italy, the Chairperson of the Executive Council (“the Council”). On behalf of the Moroccan delegation, I commend you on the brilliant manner in which you have guided our deliberations, which I hope will come to a successful conclusion. You can always count on the cooperation of my delegation to help us achieve a positive outcome.

I should also like to express the full support and continued trust of my delegation to the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr Fernando Arias, and to the staff of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) for their professionalism and devotion. The Director-General’s relevant and informative report remains a valuable source of inspiration for our work.

My country fully aligns itself with the statement of the African Group delivered by Ambassador Kamal Bashir Ahmed Mohamed Khair, the Permanent Representative of the Sudan, and with that of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, delivered by Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Regarding the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (“the OPCW Africa Programme”), Morocco welcomes the capacity-building activities put in place by the Secretariat within the framework of the Programme’s fourth phase, and calls for the Programme’s continuation and enhancement.

My delegation welcomes the consultations launched by the Secretariat with all of the African National Authorities and Permanent Representations, which are aimed at evaluating and restructuring the OPCW Africa Programme. In this connection, it is worth stressing the importance of continuing to maximise the impact of these programmes and adapt them to the specific realities of each State Party.



In this regard, Morocco calls for strengthened coordination through the OPCW Africa Programme Steering Committee; promotion of South-South cooperation; optimisation of laboratory capabilities; and the establishment of subregional training centres to support the Secretariat's activities on the Continent.

In support of the capacity-building efforts undertaken by the Secretariat in view of achieving the common objectives related to implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Convention"), the National Authorities of Morocco and of Togo initiated, within the framework of the 2018 Mentorship/Partnership Programme, a process to exchange and share experiences. My country would recall that it is prepared to cooperate fully with the Secretariat and African States Parties to promote mutual capacity building.

In this context, Morocco should like to reiterate its gratitude for the voluntary contributions to the OPCW Africa Programme, but considers nonetheless that the Programme's success unquestionably depends on more stable and sustainable financing.

To achieve a world forever free from the chemical threat, the States Parties are called upon to continue to work tirelessly in order to safeguard the norm from being eroded, and to resolutely put an end to chemical weapons use in the world. Morocco reiterates in the strongest terms its condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances, and for whatever reason.

Furthermore, my delegation has taken note of the latest report of the Declaration Assessment Team. My country is pleased to note the verified and complete destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, and encourages continued dialogue between that State Party and the Secretariat to ensure optimal implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the relevant decisions on this subject, as well as to resolve all of the outstanding questions that remain unanswered.

My country calls for increased efforts to eradicate the extremist threats that continue to exist in many aspects. In this connection, my delegation welcomes the usefulness of the activities undertaken by the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, chaired by Ambassador Oji Nyimenuate Ngofa of Nigeria, and by the Sub-Working Group on non-State actors, chaired by Ambassador María Teresa Infante of Chile.

Faced with this threat, the African States Parties must, with the support of the Secretariat, develop the prevention capacities to counter the risks of the use of chemicals as weapons by non-State actors. My delegation welcomes in particular the establishment of the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission and encourages the organisation of meetings to promote coordination between all of the parties concerned.

In reference to the outcomes of the Fourth Review Conference, my delegation reiterates its support for the creation of an open-ended working group, co-chaired by Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador and Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia, whom I thank for the excellent work accomplished so far in reconciling the different points of view. This group could serve as a platform to stimulate dialogue on issues of common interest in view of adopting a collective vision that can strengthen the unity of the OCPW and make it more dynamic.

In addition, my delegation would like to express its support for the Council Chairperson's initiative aimed at creating a mechanism to strengthen the facilitation structures to put in

place a concrete and achievable action plan. My delegation is prepared to work together with all of the delegations to initiate a founding process to strengthen the fair implementation of the provisions of the Convention through targeted actions based on the principles of non-discrimination and consensus.

Following the annual review and evaluation workshop on the components of an agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI, in application of decision C-16/DEC.10, my delegation underscores the importance of preparing a document containing recommendations that could serve as a reference for the possible implementation of a consensual action plan to strengthen the implementation of that article. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Article XI facilitator for his active engagement in this regard.

In conclusion, I welcome the draft budget for 2020 presented by the Secretariat, and should like to congratulate the co-facilitators and the Secretariat for their commitment throughout the process of reviewing this draft in view of its adoption by consensus. My delegation sincerely hopes that the informal consultations carried out in this context will result in the expected consensus being achieved around this issue, which is so fundamental to the continuity, and even the existence, of the OPCW.

I thank you for your attention.

I would ask that this statement be considered as an official document of the Ninety-Second Session of the Council.

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