

BRAZIL
NATIONAL STATEMENT
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL – 93rd SESSION
OPCW

Mr Chairman,

I would like to begin by, on behalf of Brazil, praising your work as chairman of the Executive Council. You have steered this body with competence and diligence through the meetings of the EC. Brazil also appreciates the commitment of the other members of the bureau: Ambassador Kamal Bashir Ahmed of the Sudan; Ambassador Alireza Kazemi Abadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Ambassador Brândusa Predescu of Romania; and Ambassador Jorge Skinner-Klée Arenales of Guatemala.

Brazil also commends the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias - and, in his name, the whole of the Technical Secretariat -, for their professionalism and dedication to implement the decisions of the states parties and to constantly improve the work of the OPCW, towards the full realization of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone, under any circumstances. We have followed attentively the recent briefing with updates on the investigations by the FFM on the incidents of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, as well as the work of the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). We renew our support to the Technical Secretariat, and encourage its work. We also recognize the Syrian efforts to fully implement its obligations under the CWC and prompt them to continue to cooperate with the Secretariat in clarifying pending issues.

Regarding the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), which is expected to deliver its first report soon, under the able leadership of Ambassador Santiago Oñate, we reiterate our view that

all the investigations carried out by this team must be impartial, balanced and comprehensive. These are essential requirements for perpetrators to be held accountable for violations of the CWC. We expect the IIT to serve not only as an instrument for addressing current threats arising from chemical weapons use, but also to convey an exemplary message which can help prevent the re-emergence of the development, production, stockpiling or use of chemicals as warfare material.

Mr. Chairman,

The chemical industrial parks of many states parties are oriented exclusively towards the peaceful uses of chemistry, and they have occupied, and continue to do so, a key position in the technological, social and economic development of those countries. In order to allow them to maintain and improve its pivotal role within national societies, it is paramount that the industry in our region is not overburdened with controls, as a consequence of uneven geographical distribution, which may affect its competitiveness and hamper its necessary growth.

Brazil considers the CWC and the OPCW, as the organization in charge of implementing it, to be the gold standard for multilateral regimes on weapons of mass destruction. If it is clear that the most distinctive feature of the CWC is the full-fledged and effective verification mechanism established by it, we must be permanently alert to avoid that the afore-mentioned system does not impose unequal or discriminatory measures upon industrial parks around the world.

We are pleased to note the review, examined by the Council in its 91st session, of the methodology for the selection of "Other Chemical Production Facilities" (Verification Annex, Part IX) for inspections, with positive impacts on the frequency of inspections of particular industries. We would like, nonetheless, to see the issue further discussed, so that we can also achieve a more balanced and equitable geographical distribution of inspections among the regions.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil believes that the full compliance with the provisions set in the CWC by all the States Parties, especially the developing countries, can only be achieved through international cooperation and capacity building. We encourage the OPCW to keep fostering and strengthening activities and programmes related to those areas with a view to promoting the peaceful uses of chemistry. In this process, due regard should be given to the right of States Parties to economic and technological development, including the exchange of scientific and technical information, chemicals and equipment for purposes not prohibited by the Convention.

Brazil is proud of its contribution to international cooperation, especially in the Latin American region and with Portuguese-speaking states parties. Repeating the experience of previous years, Brazil has presented to the Technical Secretariat several proposals for offering training on Assistance and Protection and Medical Responses. Two of them will take place this year. Additionally, Brazil, reassured by the successful outcome of previous experiences, has placed a standing offer to the Secretariat to take part in the Mentorship Programme for article VII. We are also willing to cooperate with the Organisation in the training of inspectors.

The regular editions of the “Review & Evaluation Workshops of the Components of an Agreed Framework for the Full Implementation of Article XI” have enabled fruitful discussions. Brazil supports the facilitator’s proposal to create a drafting committee to organize and systematize the ideas emerging from them. Brazil encourages all regions to participate in the exercise.

Brazil also supports the upgrading of the OPCW laboratory into the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (Chemtech Centre), in order to allow the Organisation to keep pace with the latest technologies and scientific findings in the chemical field. The Chemtech Centre should be a platform for the diffusion of chemical knowledge for peaceful purposes and for addressing peace and security challenges arising from the use of chemistry.

Given that chemical threats can arise anywhere, the extension of the OPCW designated laboratory network to Africa and to Latin America and the Caribbean is of the essence, so that every region can count on impartial facilities, capable of fast response. Brazil's aspiring institutions continue to perform well in their efforts towards designation. We thank the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties that have been our partners in this endeavor.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil recognizes the work carried out by the co-facilitators on organisational governance issues, Ambassadors Augustin Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador, and I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia. We are pleased to note that the States Parties are moving towards consensus in a number of important issues.

In that context, Brazil stresses once again the importance of the universal character of the OPCW, which should count on staff representing the whole of its membership. We praise the efforts of the DG to achieve a more gender balanced workforce, which has increased the representation of women in the top structure of the Organisation from 10% to 50%, and expect, as a natural follow-up, that such a remarkable achievement can be extended to the whole of the OPCW's staff. We underline, nonetheless, the need to equally achieve a truly balanced geographical diversity in the workforce of the OPCW. It is of particular concern that GRULAC nationals amount to only 6% of the whole Secretariat's staff. The contribution of experts with diverse backgrounds and varied capabilities can contribute to an environment of better understanding among all the States Parties and, perhaps, can prove itself a valuable tool for our effort to restore consensus in the Organisation.

Thank you