



STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, DELIVERED BY
H.E. MR OJI NYIMENUATE NGOFA, AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE NINETY-THIRD SESSION OF
THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, 10 – 13 MARCH 2020

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

At the outset, I warmly welcome back Ambassador Andrea Perugini of Italy as Chairperson of the Executive Council ("the Council") and reaffirm the full confidence of my delegation in his competencies. I wish to assure you, Mr Chairperson, of our full support during this session and until the end of your tenure.

I also appreciate the Director-General, H.E. Mr Fernando Arias, for his very informative and comprehensive statement delivered at this session and express the full support of my delegation to him and the entire staff of the Technical Secretariat ("the Secretariat") in their work.

The Nigerian delegation aligns itself with the statement of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, which was delivered by H.E. Mr Jafar Huseynzada of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Nigerian delegation also aligns itself with the statement of the African Group, delivered by H.E. Mr. Kamal Bashir Ahmed, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Sudan.

Mr Chairperson,

Nigeria continues to encourage the full and verifiable destruction of all chemical weapons stockpiles, including old and abandoned chemical weapons. We note the

reports of the Director-General to this Council detailing the progress made in this regard and commend the concerned States Parties and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts.

My delegation notes also, the national papers by the Syrian Arab Republic and the reports of the Director-General, related to the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. We urge continued cooperation between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Secretariat, including the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and the Declarations Assessment Team (DAT), to clarify all outstanding issues related to the initial declaration of Syria, and suspected incidents of use of chemicals as weapons within the country.

Nigeria remains fully committed to the prevention of chemical terrorism and use of toxic chemicals as weapons by non-state actors. We believe that this Organisation has an important role to play in this regard, especially in sharing knowledge and best-practices in the manufacture, storage, trade, and transfer of toxic chemicals, as well as strategies towards effective response, investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of chemical terrorism. We commend the Organisation's contribution to global counter-terrorism efforts, as outlined in the report of the Director-General (EC-93/DG.10), particularly the programmes and activities of the Secretariat geared towards building the capacities of states parties to adequately monitor toxic chemicals within their borders. My delegation encourages States Parties to fully utilise the forum provided by the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T), which I am honoured to chair, to share experiences in this regard.

Noting that the proposed OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology will contribute to an increase in capacity building activities for the states parties and chemical knowledge retention for the Organisation, my delegation wishes to re-echo the call by the Director-General for states parties who are in a position to do so, to make voluntary contributions to this project and look forward to its commencement and timely completion.

Mr Chairperson,

The Nigerian delegation commends the Director-General for the extension of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (Africa Programme), to its fifth phase. We are particularly delighted with the identification of three priority areas for effective implementation of the Convention on the African Continent, following constant engagement by the Secretariat with African Permanent Representations and National Authorities. We look forward to robust implementation of this phase of the Africa Programme, with tangible, measurable outcomes and warmly commend the Secretariat for their robust engagement with the African States Parties.

My delegation pays tribute to the facilitators of Articles VI, VII, X and XI for their work in advancing full implementation of the CWC. We commend also, the co-facilitators on Organisational Governance Issues, who facilitated discussions on issues of importance to the smooth functioning of this Organisation. My delegation believes that some of the issues merit further robust discussions and look forward to a continuation of this facilitation beyond this Session. We express the hope that States Parties would be able to achieve consensus on issues that can modernise the OPCW and make it fit for purpose in the 21st Century.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, before this Council is a draft decision for the amendment of the rules of procedure of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF), and proposed amendments to that draft decision. Nigeria urges all states parties to engage in constructive dialogue and consultations in order to arrive at a consensual and inclusive decision that strengthens the ABAF in its independent, advisory role.

On the draft decision sponsored by a group of states parties proposing that the Council recommend that the aerosolised use of Central Nervous System-acting chemicals is inconsistent with law enforcement purposes, we recognise that this draft decision is in line with the advice of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) on use of these chemicals for riot-control purposes, and hence, understand the good faith initiative of the sponsoring states parties. However, my delegation observes that there are different views among the states parties on this very technical issue and encourages the co-sponsors and states with contrary views to engage in frank and open discussion so a consensual decision can be reached, consistent with the object and purpose of the Convention.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Session and posted on the External Server of the OPCW. Thank you for your attention.