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MOROCCO

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

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

I should like to begin by reiterating, on behalf of the Moroccan delegation, the full support of the wise leadership of Mr Andrea Perugini, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy. In the hopes that the deliberations of this session of the Executive Council (“the Council”) will come to a successful conclusion, I am pleased to commend you for the brilliant manner in which you have guided our work during your tenure. I wish you, Mr Chairperson, every success in your future duties.

My delegation would also like to express its full trust and continued support to the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr Fernando Arias, and to the staff of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) for their professionalism and dedication. The Director-General’s complete and informative report to this session, very much appreciated by my delegation, is a valuable source of inspiration for our work.

It goes without saying that my delegation fully aligns itself with the statement of the African Group delivered by Mr Kamal Bashir Ahmed Mohamed Khair, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Sudan, and with that of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, delivered by Mr Jafar Huseynzada, Acting Director of the Department of Political and Military Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Underscoring the importance of a balanced and optimal implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), my country reiterates, once again, its permanent position in favour of capacity building in the States Parties, in particular in developing ones, to best meet their obligations under the Convention and to face the current challenges.



In this connection, Morocco would underscore the importance of the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (“the Africa Programme”), a wise initiative of the Director-General aimed at optimising implementation of the Convention on the African continent. Morocco welcomes the achievements under the fourth phase of the Programme and still remains firm in its commitment to working together with all stakeholders to ensure the continuation and success of the Africa Programme in its fifth phase.

In this context, my country expresses its full support for the OPCW’s efforts aimed at promoting, within the framework of the Convention, active and effective South-South cooperation in view of implementing mutual capacity-building activities that are tailored to the specific realities of each State Party and each subregion. It is for this reason that my delegation welcomes in particular the initiative of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division in organising, on 30 and 31 January 2020, the workshop on the sharing of best practices, which was intended for States Parties that had participated in the National Authority Mentorship/Partnership Programme. That activity demonstrated the positive impact of partnerships and exchanges among National Authorities in view of strengthening the Convention in Africa.

Furthermore, my delegation, reiterating its gratitude to the donors for their generous voluntary contributions, considers nonetheless that, in order to maintain the positive momentum of the Africa Programme, the Programme’s success depends on a more stable and sustainable method of financing.

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

Furthermore, my delegation has taken note of the latest information presented last week by 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 the continuation of a constructive 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

The threat of non-State actors remains a major concern for all countries. 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.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission. Faced with this chemical threat, my delegation calls on States Parties, in particular in Africa, to work in cooperation with the Secretariat to build prevention capabilities in order to counter the risks of the use of chemicals as weapons by non-State actors.

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention and resolution 1540 of the United Nations Security Council, Morocco will very soon develop a legal framework that allows it to put in place a national mechanism for the control of imports and exports of dual use goods, which is aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons or their means of delivery.

My delegation welcomes the excellent work accomplished by the co-facilitators—Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of El Salvador, and I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Indonesia—within the framework of the intersessional meetings with a view to reconciling the different points of view on the issues related to organisational governance. The renewal of the mandate of this framework for exchanges, set up under the initiative of the Chairperson of the Council, will allow for more convergence of views and compromise to give our Organisation the tools it needs in order to discharge its responsibilities. I wish their successors, our colleagues Ms Laura Dupuy Lasserre, the Ambassador of Uruguay, and Mr Matthew Neuhaus, the Ambassador of Australia, every success in the accomplishment of this important mission.

I wish to announce that, in support of the OPCW's efforts to establish a research centre for chemistry and technology that will allow it to adapt to the growing needs in the areas of training of experts and capacity building in States Parties, Morocco in the coming days will make a voluntary contribution to the special fund set up especially for this project.

To conclude, I should like to thank my brother, Mr Kamal Mohamed Khair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Sudan, as well as his delegation, for the work carried out throughout his term as Coordinator of the African Group. Moreover, I address my sincere congratulations and my best wishes to Mr Oji Ngofa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nigeria, who will soon take over the duties of coordinating the African Group.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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

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