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BANGLADESH

**STATEMENT BY MR KAZI RUSSEL PERVEZ COUNSELLOR AND
REPRESENTATIVE OF BANGLADESH TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Chairperson of the Executive Council,
Director-General,
Deputy Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I welcome your Excellency, Mr Agustín Vásquez Gómez, as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. We express our confidence in you and hope that the conduct of business of this session will come to a successful conclusion under your able leadership. We pledge our full support to you in the discharge of your mandate.

My delegation wishes to thank the Director-General for his comprehensive statement, as well as the Vice-Chairpersons for their respective reports presented at this session.

The delegation of Bangladesh wishes to commend the Director-General and his team in the Technical Secretariat for their sincere efforts towards the full implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Bangladesh's delegation aligns itself with the statement made at this session by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

We are all now faced with a huge global challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has not only taken away many lives, but has also inflicted unprecedented shocks to our economies and societies. Bangladesh, therefore, underscores the need for robust multilateral efforts to stem the severity of this pandemic for saving the lives and livelihoods of our peoples. We call upon intensified international cooperation to contain the pandemic and recover from its fallouts, including by exchanging appropriate information, scientific knowledge, and best practices.

Bangladesh considers the Chemical Weapons Convention an important disarmament treaty. It is our firm conviction that a culture of consensus and spirit of cooperation among us serves the best in our quest for non-proliferation and complete disarmament of chemical weapons as well as preventing the use or re-emergence of chemical weapons.



Bangladesh eagerly looks forward to the substantive progress of the coordination mechanism for revitalising the existing facilitations in the advancement of the object and purpose of the Convention. We would, once again, like to register our gratitude to the outgoing co-facilitators, Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador and Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia, for their hard work and dedicated efforts in this regard. We also wholeheartedly welcome Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus of Australia and Ambassador Laura Dupuy Laserre of Uruguay as the new facilitators on organisational governance issues. We are hopeful that their leadership will soon bring the outcomes that we all truly expect.

We emphasise the goal of destroying the stockpiles and the abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) at the earliest opportunity. Bangladesh would like to see more resources for the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons and the promotion of the peaceful use of chemistry for the safety and well-being of humanity.

Bangladesh takes note of the first report issued by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) of the Technical Secretariat on the incidents of the use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals as weapons on 24, 25, and 30 March 2017 in Ltamenah in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Bangladesh reaffirms that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and all norms of international law.

As an original signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Bangladesh is firmly convinced that only the States Parties' unflinching commitment to the Convention in its entirety, in letter and spirit, can make the world more secure from the curse of chemical weapons. We, therefore, urge all to uphold the Convention under all circumstances.

The Chemical Weapons Convention calls for, among others, promotion of free trade in chemicals as well as international cooperation and exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of chemical activities in order to enhance the economic and technological development of all States Parties. Bangladesh would like to underline the importance of the promotion of international cooperation, as mandated by the Convention, for the benefits of all States Parties. We would like to underscore, once again, that unless we invest in the capacity-building process, with necessary knowledge and tools to deter the non-proliferation and re-emergence of chemical weapons, it would be challenging for the developing world to fully comply with the Convention.

We would also seek the attention of the Technical Secretariat and developed countries for robust laboratory twinning programme to complement the capacity-building efforts of the States Parties of the developing regions.

Bangladesh reiterates the importance of assistance and protection against chemical weapons. We would like to express our gratitude to the Technical Secretariat for extending its support for successfully organising our national training programmes on chemical incident preparedness for hospitals (HosPrep) in July 2019 in Dhaka. As the first State Party to introduce the HosPrep project, Bangladesh would be happy to share its experiences with the interested States Parties.

Bangladesh reiterates its support for a Technical Secretariat staffed with gender balance and geographical diversity to reflect its true international character. We would like to commend the Director-General for his leadership in bringing progress in this regard, particularly ensuring gender parity at the Organisation's top structure. We would urge that in a similar spirit, the Technical Secretariat would demonstrate its innovative quest to address the issue of geographical diversity as well. We are hopeful that the Technical Secretariat would be able to roll out innovative internship and JPO programmes towards ensuring geographical diversity in the Organisation.

Before I conclude, let me touch upon the very necessity of using our conscience and consensus to continue along the chosen path of the Convention towards a safer world for all of us.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Ninety-Fourth Session of the Executive Council.

I thank you.

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