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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR. ALIREZA KAZEMI ABADI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO
THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr Chairperson
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, I would like to welcome Your Excellency Ambassador Augustin Vasquez Gomez as the chair of the Ninety-Fourth Session of the Executive Council. I express my confidence in your leadership, under the current complicated circumstances caused by the outbreak of COVID-19, to steer this session to its successful conclusion, and my delegation assures you of its full cooperation.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Fikrat Akhundov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OPCW on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and China.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Director-General, His Excellency Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his comprehensive report delivered in this Session.

Regarding the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) released on 8 April 2020, my delegation was not oblivious of the fact that the report of a team created by a politicised and weak decision (C-SS-4/DEC.3) to accuse the Syrian Arab Republic would be devoid of impartiality and accuracy and contain non-professional and judiciary-like allegations based on inauthentic data and open sources. The repeated practice to rely on unfounded or dubious sources against one of the Members of the Organisation will truly raise serious concerns in the future work of this Organisation. Given the fact that the investigation of the IIT was not based on a field study, it was clear that the investigation would include a considerable number of deficiencies. It is unacceptable that the IIT has conducted an inaccurate investigation, but had the imprudence and audacity to have an unsubstantiated identification against the Syrian Arab Republic. Once again my delegation reiterates that giving the responsibility of “attribution” to the Technical Secretariat to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons is beyond the provisions of the Convention.



We hope that the so-called report of the IIT does not have an adverse effect on the constructive cooperation between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Technical Secretariat which has been constantly continuing during the past years. The Syrian Arab Republic has submitted its seventy-ninth monthly report regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its chemical weapons and their production facilities (CWPFs) and has reiterated its readiness to continue consultations as well as meetings with the Technical Secretariat to resolve all outstanding issues.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic also had its impact on some of the activities related to Syria including the 23rd round of consultations between the Syrian National Authority and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). In accordance with the report by the Director-General (EC-94/DG.5 dated 25 May 2020), the Director-General has taken the decision to postpone all scheduled deployments and missions of the Technical Secretariat until further notice, and this includes missions in the Syrian Arab Republic. Syria has declared its full readiness to continue these consultations and we hope that they restart after the revocation of the aforementioned decision of the Technical Secretariat.

It is worth mentioning that while the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is making every endeavour to provide the ground for effective cooperation with the Technical Secretariat, the terrorist groups in Syria continue their attacks against unarmed civilians to make the security situation extremely dangerous.

I have to emphasise once again that the activities of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria should be of technical nature, depoliticised, based on validated information and reliable sources, and carried out on the basis of impartiality and professionalism.

Once again we would like to reiterate our concerns that the only remaining possessor State Party did not have a firm intention to utilise its entire capacity to fulfill its commitments, i.e. to complete the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. We urge this State Party to accelerate the process of the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles and take all-out measures to complete destruction before the scheduled timeline.

On the draft decision entitled “OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF) – Rules of Procedures”, my delegation is of the view that the proposed draft decision requires amendments to make it acceptable. We also believe that there is an urgent need for the States Parties to continue their discussions on different aspects of the Aerosolized Use of Central Nervous System (CNS)-Acting Chemicals and their impact. At any case my delegation is not in a position to agree with any decision or document that may restrict the usage of CNS chemicals for peaceful purposes such as medicine, pharmaceuticals, chemical industry, agriculture, etc..

The full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI of the Convention is of great importance, and it is unfortunate that there is still a lack of necessary progress in the implementation of this Article. Despite the efforts made to this end, the facts reveal an unbalanced implementation of the Convention and non-compliance of some States Parties with their obligations towards the implementation of this Article. My delegation strongly rejects imposing discriminatory restrictions and particularly unilateral sanctions against the Member States of this Organisation, which directly affects the health and medication of their population particularly the victims of chemical weapons or hinders the development pace of developing countries in the field of chemical activities for peaceful purposes.

Having studied the document on transfers of funds during 2019 (EC-94/DG.10 dated 19 June 2020) my delegation would like to inform that though we understand the reasons for the Technical Secretariat to implement such transfers, we are not happy with the transfer of a considerable amount namely EUR 314,950 from the International Cooperation and Assistance Programme to another Programme in 2019. We expect that the Technical Secretariat makes its efforts to avoid similar transfers from a Programme which is of importance for the developing States Parties in the future.

The unilateral sanctions against my nation have deprived the victims of the chemical weapons to have access to essential medications and have increased their physical and mental suffering more than ever, especially when the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this situation. We expect that the States Parties under the good offices of the Director-General to assist the chemical weapons victims in whatever ways possible.

In closing, I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the OPCW's public website.

Thank you.

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