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**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE  
COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

At the outset, the Chinese delegation wishes to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the Executive Council, and on your assumption of the chairmanship of this session. The Chinese delegation commends you for your efforts to overcome the impact of COVID-19 and make the convocation of this session possible. This delegation is convinced that, with your diplomatic experience and skills, you will certainly be able to improve the work and the atmosphere of the Council, enhance the unity and the spirit of consensus of the States Parties, and bring the deliberation of all the agenda items to a successful conclusion.

The Chinese delegation has listened carefully to the statement made by the Director General, as well as the reports by the Vice-Chairpersons. This delegation associates itself with the statement by H.E. Fikrat Akhundov, Representative of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the NAM CWC States Parties and China. Now, please allow me to elaborate China's positions and views further on some important issues.

Firstly, with respect to the destruction of chemical weapons (CWs), China has taken note of the progress made in the destruction of CW stockpiles in recent years. China urges the remaining CW possessor State to fulfil its obligation under the Convention in earnest by completing their destruction as soon as possible within the timeframe specified by the decision of the Conference on the extended deadline for the destruction of CWs. Thanks to the joint efforts made by China and Japan, some progress has been made in the destruction of the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China (Japanese ACWs). However, the overall destruction process is still lagging far behind schedule, and Japanese ACWs still pose a real threat to the lives and properties of the people and the environmental safety in China. China urges Japan to fulfil its obligation as the abandoning State Party dutifully, increase its inputs to advance the destruction process, and deal properly with such prominent issues as the contaminated soil. As always, China will offer its cooperation. Currently, the destruction of Japanese ACWs has been postponed due to COVID-19. China will stay in constant communication with Japan and the Technical Secretariat (TS) regarding the resumption of operations in due time.

Secondly, on the issue of the elimination of Syria's CW program, China has noted the relevant reports issued by the Director-General and by Syria. China understands that the planned deployments and activities have been deferred due to COVID-19. China supports the TS and Syria in maintaining their engagement and dialogue, and in resuming activities when conditions permit, so as to forge positive progress in the clarification of Syria's Initial Declaration and the resolution of other outstanding issues.



China has been consistently against the use of CWs by any State or any individual under any circumstances. With regards to the alleged use of CWs, China believes that in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and its Verification Annex, a full, impartial and objective investigation shall be conducted, so that a conclusion will be arrived at, which will stand the test of facts and time. As far as the work of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) is concerned, China emphasised from the very beginning that its establishment was beyond the scope of the mandate of the Convention. However, some States Parties pushed the establishment of this mechanism by forcible means, which has come to worsen the division and confrontation among States Parties on the issue of the Syrian CWs. China is also concerned over the working methodology and procedure of the IIT. The composition of its staff does not reflect an equitable geographical representation.

Again, China calls on all sides to bring the attribution of the responsibility of the use of CWs back into the framework of the Convention. As a technical body, the TS should comply with the Convention strictly, and perform its own duty with a spirit of impartiality, objectivity, and independence. As for the policy-making organs, such as the Executive Council, they should play their due roles in properly addressing this issue on the basis of facts and with the Convention as the yardstick. The Council must draw any conclusion or take any action with caution and in all seriousness, and pending that, in-depth and full discussions should be conducted. China calls upon all the parties to bridge their disagreements through dialogue, in a joint effort to preserve the authority and solemnity of the Convention.

Thirdly, regarding the amendment of the Rules of Procedure of the ABAF, China reiterates that, as an open mechanism with no decision-making power, the body should maintain its diversity and geographical balance. States Parties have the right to nominate candidates as they see fit, with their qualifications consistent with those of other comparable international organisations. It is inappropriate to create any additional qualification or code of conduct which is subjective, arbitrary, ambiguous or disputable.

Fourthly, concerning the aerosolized use of central nervous system-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes, China stresses that this issue involves not only technical but also legal aspects. It would exert a capital impact on the Convention itself and on the obligations under it for States Parties, and should thus be addressed with prudence. Though the issue has been raised for many years, States Parties should carry on with their thorough discussions and in-depth exchange of views, in order to forge a broadly-based consensus.

Fifthly, the Chinese delegation encourages the Chairman, the Vice-Chairpersons and all the facilitators to keep playing their active roles in bringing the various facilitation mechanisms to take measures to improve the working methodologies, and advance the work in all aspects under the Convention in an all-round and balanced way.

The Chinese delegation requests that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and uploaded onto the internal website of the OPCW.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.