



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Ninety-Fourth Session

7 – 9 July 2020

EC-94/NAT.59

9 July 2020

ENGLISH only

**INDIA**

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE ON THE DRAFT DECISION “ADDRESSING THE POSSESSION AND USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS BY THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC” AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

India has taken the floor to explain its vote on the draft decision on “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic”.

As members of the Executive Council are aware, India has always attached the highest importance to the full and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We have maintained that any use of chemical weapons would be in complete disregard of humanity, and reprehensible. It would also be in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. India has been firmly opposed to any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, under any circumstances. The perpetrators of such abhorrent acts must be held accountable.

India has an impeccable record on non-proliferation of chemical weapons and has supported various measures for strengthening the Convention. We have also extended our full support to the OPCW and the Technical Secretariat. We believe that the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat have served the Convention well.

We have seen the First Report of the IIT on incidents in Ltamenah, Syria. India has consistently underlined the need for impartial and objective investigation into any use of chemical weapons, following scrupulously the provisions of the Convention, the procedures embedded within it, and in conformity with the delicate balance of power and responsibility enshrined under it, to establish the facts and to reach evidence-based conclusions.

India believes that the issues mentioned in the draft decision need to be resolved through a process of engagement and dialogue with the State Party.

Therefore, India has decided to abstain on the draft decision.

Let me reiterate that India remains willing and open to discussions with States Parties to find ways and means to strengthen the Convention and its effective implementation.

I would request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the OPCW public website.

Thank you Mr Chairperson.

--- 0 ---

