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PERU

**STATEMENT BY THE ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PERU
TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Ambassador Agustín Vásquez,

I would like to begin my statement congratulating you on your designation as Chairperson of the Executive Council of our Organisation and representing the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries. Just as we have expressed jointly with all of the delegations of the Regional Group, I will reiterate the full support of the delegation of Peru for your leadership as Chairperson of the Executive Council.

Likewise, we express our gratitude to the Director-General, the Technical Secretariat, and the Bureau for the efforts undertaken to make this session of the Executive Council possible in such difficult circumstances due to the health crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, we welcome the Director-General and the complete report that he presented at this session, and we reiterate our support for the decisions that must be taken in order to continue the work that the Technical Secretariat is carrying out in compliance with the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention, without putting the health of the Organisation's staff at risk.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement by the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, save for paragraphs 14 and 32 of said statement, which address the cooperation of Syria with the OPCW and the use of aerosolised central nervous system-acting chemicals, respectively.

Peru wishes to reiterate its absolute support for the work of the Technical Secretariat in the Syrian Arab Republic, particularly the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and its investigations into the events in Syria, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). With regard to the latest report by the DAT, we note with grave concern that it has not yet been possible to resolve the inconsistencies found in the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, in spite of the multiple initiatives of the Director-General within the framework of the Structured Dialogue that has been under way. We welcome the efforts of the Technical Secretariat in this regard and urge the Syrian Arab Republic to open up cooperation with the OPCW; doing so would demonstrate positive results in a short period of time.



The first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) was presented this past April and concludes that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Air Force is responsible for the use of chemical weapons in the incidents that took place on 24, 25, and 30 March 2017 in the city of Ltamenah (Syrian Arab Republic). This report represents the result of unprecedented efforts of the OPCW's Technical Secretariat to identify those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and thus contribute to ensuring that there is no longer impunity for the flagrant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the standards of international law. We reiterate our support for the legality and legitimacy of the mandate of the IIT, and we recognise the independence, professionalism, and impartiality of its work; we express our appreciation for its Coordinator, Ambassador Santiago Oñate, for his leadership in this process.

We regret that once more, the Syrian Arab Republic has not provided the necessary cooperation for working with the IIT, in spite of the fact that paragraph 7 of Article VII of the Chemical Weapons Convention underscores the obligation of all States Parties to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat in carrying out its functions.

With regard to the issues of assistance, protection, and cooperation, we are currently faced with challenging times in which meetings and face-to-face activities have had to be restricted by measures mitigating the spread of the global pandemic in which we are living. In spite of this, we welcome the efforts that are being made to carry out as many scheduled activities as possible using virtual platforms, such as the forthcoming meeting of the National Authorities of Regional Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), which will be taking place this coming 30 July. We must continue to encourage the use of virtual platforms in order to accomplish the tasks on this year's agenda, which includes a variety of courses, programmes, and training courses envisioned under Articles X and XI.

Peru is pleased to be one of more than 40 countries contributing to the trust fund for the construction of the OPCW's new Centre for Chemistry and Technology. We are confident that this Centre will be of great importance for cooperation in the field of chemistry and will contribute to achieving the objectives of our founding treaty.

Mr Chairperson, I kindly request that this statement be considered an official document of this session of the Council.

Thank you.

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