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AZERBAIJAN

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBERS OF THE NON-ALIGNED
MOVEMENT THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS
CONVENTION AND CHINA
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR FIKRAT AKHUNDOV PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China (Non-Aligned Movement and China).

At the outset, we would like to welcome H.E. Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Ambassador of El Salvador as the Chairperson of the Executive Council and express our confidence in his leadership to steer this session of the Council to a successful conclusion. We wish to thank the Director-General, H.E. Fernando Arias and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council for their reports. The Group conveys its appreciation to the OPCW staff for their dedication to the implementation of the Organisation's noble objectives.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China recognise the global challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and express the need for concerted multilateral efforts to manage its negative consequences, particularly those of an economic nature, which may hamper a full recovery from this crisis. We call for intensified international cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, including by exchanging information, scientific knowledge and best practices. In that regard, we note the Declaration of the online summit-level meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement and China Contact Group in response to COVID-19, adopted on 4 May 2020 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

We recognise that ensuring the full application of the Rules of Procedure of the OPCW for the hosting of the Ninety-Fourth Session of the Executive Council has been a major challenge and a major concern of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat. Whilst we understand the exceptional nature of the modalities adopted for the holding of this session of the Council and emphasise the right of the States Parties to follow and participate actively in its work without any discrimination, we wish to state that such modalities should be regarded as exceptional and not create any precedent for the future.



Regarding the coordination mechanism to revitalise existing facilitations, we look forward to concrete actions, based on consensus, that advance the objective and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention) in a non-discriminatory and balanced manner, in accordance with the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China's pioneering role in advancing this proposal. We express appreciation for outgoing facilitators on organisational governance issues – H.E. Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Ambassador of El-Salvador and H.E. I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Ambassador of Indonesia and welcome the appointment of H.E. Matthew Neuhaus, Ambassador of Australia and H.E. Laura Dupuy Lasserre, Ambassador of Uruguay as the new facilitators. We urge the Chairperson of the Executive Council, in his role as the Head of the Coordination Mechanism, to encourage the revitalisation of all facilitations, taking into consideration the NAM & China Position Paper of States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China dated 4th October 2019.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China attach great importance to the universality of the Convention and in this regard, strongly urge the States not Party to ratify or accede to the Convention without further delay or preconditions, and emphasise that those States not Party should not derive any benefit therefrom.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China reiterate their long-standing principled position toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we underline that the existence and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a significant threat to international peace and security. We further underline that full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention contributes to regional and international peace and security.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China stress 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 Convention, the legal norms and the standards of the international community. We also reaffirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China condemn the use of chemical weapons by terrorist groups. Deeply concerned about the use or threat of use by such groups, we request the Technical Secretariat to investigate, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, all reports on the use or threat of use of chemical weapons by such groups and inform the States Parties accordingly.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China express their deep concern regarding any attempt to accuse States Parties of using chemical weapons on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations made by media reports or any other open sources, including non-governmental entities. This trend can cause a dangerous precedent in the future work of the OPCW.

Noting with serious concern that the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of chemical weapons was not met by certain possessor States, the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China stress that the destruction of chemical weapons is the fundamental and top priority of the Organisation and urge the only remaining possessor States

to expedite all necessary measures to ensure its compliance with the provisions of the Convention and relevant decisions of the policy-making organs.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China stress that the destruction of old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons should be completed in the shortest possible time in accordance with the Convention and relevant decisions adopted by the policy-making organs (PMOs).

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China stress that further efforts should be made to complete the destruction of chemical weapons on the territory of China, abandoned by Japan, as soon as possible and to address the challenges including ensuring the safety of people and protecting the environment in accordance with the Convention and the Council's decision (EC-67/DEC.6) as amended by the Council at its Eighty-Fourth Session in accordance with the destruction plan beyond the year 2016 which was jointly submitted by Japan and China. The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China take note of the impact of COVID-19 on the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China, and encourage China and Japan to continue close communication to make sure the relevant work be advanced safely and smoothly.

Recalling the decisions of the Executive Council with respect to the elimination and destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons, and the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons production facilities, the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China welcome the substantive efforts made and progress achieved in this regard. We also welcome the Director-General's reports on the completion of the destruction of all chemical weapons and chemical weapon production facilities, declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. We look forward to the continuation of a successful cooperation existing between the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic on all issues.

We take note of the work done so far by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and look forward to receiving its reports on its ongoing activities. We expect the approach followed by the FFM teams would be uniform and consistent.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China attach great importance to the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of Article XI and emphasise the need to strengthen and expedite efforts in the economic and technological development of the States Parties.

We also underline the importance of the promotion of international cooperation for the benefit of States Parties through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry and removal of any discriminatory restrictions such as unilateral sanctions against other States Parties that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention, affect the Convention's long term viability, and have an adverse impact on the existing level of trust among the States Parties

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China recognise that the annual review and evaluation workshop for the components of an agreed framework for the implementation of Article XI is a useful platform to advance the development of concrete measures to enhance the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of this Article. Therefore, it is

important that in accordance with the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, the facilitation framework of this Article includes a time-frame, modalities, agenda and recommend funding and resources that can contribute to improving the celebration, the performance and effectiveness of the Annual Workshop this year.

We encourage the beginning of the work of the drafting committee, in the framework of the facilitation of the Article XI, which should streamline the list of ideas that emerged from the aforementioned review and evaluation workshops, with a view to its prompt evaluation and implementation. We appreciate the efforts made so far by the facilitator and encourage him to continue inclusive outreach and constructive dialogue with all States Parties.

We reiterate that a comprehensive discussion in the PMOs on the implementation of the decision C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011, is the effective way to formulate an OPCW strategy for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI. In this regard, we strongly call on all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to take into consideration also the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China proposals on the implementation of Article XI of the Convention, including the Plan of Action.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China emphasise that the PMOs of the OPCW should preserve and allocate substantial financial, technical and human resources in the implementation of international cooperation activities, considering national and regional needs and realities, as well as the current situation of a global pandemic.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China commend the progress achieved under the 4 previous phases of the programme to strengthen cooperation with Africa. We look forward to attaining further accomplishments under the fifth phase of this programme, which commenced on 1 January 2020. To guarantee the sustainability of this Programme, the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China underline the importance of funding it under the regular budget of the OPCW.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China express their support for the project to upgrade the current OPCW Laboratory to an OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology to strengthen science and technology capabilities of the Technical Secretariat in responding to the threat of chemical weapons, as well as to support capacity building in the States Parties. We, therefore, encourage States Parties to support the establishment of the Centre as appropriate, and urge that its modalities and mandate be considered and adopted by the PMOs. We also stress the importance of transparency in the establishment as well as the future work of the Centre.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X. We urge States Parties and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate, and effective assistance to respond to the increasing demand of States Parties.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China would like to draw the Council's attention to the new challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, the vulnerability of the victims of chemical weapons to COVID-19 requires specific and urgent assistance of all States Parties in particular the developed countries. Furthermore, the States

Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China underline that taking into account specific situation of the victim of chemical weapons and the need to help to alleviate adverse impact of COVID -19 on the victims of chemical weapons, the SAB could play an important role in this regard.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China pay profound respect to victims of chemical weapons and their families, and in light of the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011), we appreciate the States Parties for their contribution to the trust fund for the international support network for victims of chemical weapons and urge all the States Parties to actively contribute to the trust fund. We underline that insufficient contribution to the voluntary fund for assistance will considerably limit the capacity of the OPCW to provide the necessary medical assistance to the victims of chemical weapons.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China underline the responsibility of the States Parties and Technical Secretariat of the OPCW to assist the victims of chemical weapons and to coordinate and deliver to them the needed equipment, materials and medicines, in accordance with Article X. We are of the view that any restrictions, including unilateral measures, imposed by some States Parties against other States Parties, which impede assistance to the victims of chemical weapons, are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China urge States Parties to take concrete measures including, inter alia by providing materials and equipment-related assistance available to those States Parties which are in need, without any restriction. In this regard, we welcome the recent efforts by the Director-General for his good offices to facilitate assistance to the victims of chemical weapons.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue providing appropriate, effective and tailor-made technical assistance and support to States Parties in enhancing their national capacities and in carrying out their national implementation measures in the context of Article VII. We firmly believe that Article VII obligations necessitate full and effective measures by the States Parties to implement all provisions of the Convention.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China re-emphasise that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat must be fair and transparent and stress that it shall be in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Convention. It is imperative that the Technical Secretariat ensures an equitable geographical and gender balance at all professional levels of the Organisation. We consider one of the most effective ways to achieve this objective is for the Technical Secretariat to devise—as soon as possible—appropriate modalities of a funded internship and junior professional officer programme, which will enable candidates from developing regions easier access to professional positions in the Technical Secretariat.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China take note with appreciation the continuing efforts to promote gender equity within the OPCW and call for enhanced cooperation to promote the role of women and girls in the peaceful use of chemicals. In this

regard, we commend the Government of Indonesia and the Technical Secretariat's steadfast readiness for convening the fifth international symposium on women in chemistry in Indonesia.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China reiterate that the discussions on the draft decision on the OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters Rules of Procedure (ABAF) should be conducted in an open and inclusive manner, avoiding issues that may lead to politicisation and polarisation. Bearing in mind that the ABAF is an open-ended body without decision making powers, the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China hold the view that every State Party has the right to nominate experts it deems qualified and appropriate to be a member of the ABAF. We consider that broad geographical distribution and composition of experts with diversified backgrounds will benefit the functioning of the ABAF.

The States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China consider that there is a need for further comprehensive and constructive discussions, including within the PMOs concerning the issue of aerosolised use of central nervous system (CNS)-acting chemicals for law-enforcement purposes before taking any concrete actions, if possible by consensus on this issue, especially as the CNS-acting chemicals are not defined or mentioned in the CWC.

In conclusion Mr Chairperson, the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage States Parties to work in the spirit of goodwill and cooperation for the successful conclusion of this session. We reiterate that the practice of consensus-based decision-making by the PMOs is the right approach for achieving the objective and purpose of the Convention. We urge all States Parties to neither polarise nor politicise the work of the Organisation. We further reaffirm the centrality of the PMOs in the evaluation and implementation of all issues related to the Convention, in accordance with their respective mandates.

Thank you.

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