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ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE
OPCW AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez on his designation as Chairperson of this Council in representation of GRULAC. While the current state of affairs is forcing us to consider innovative methods and strategies to continue carrying out the mandate of the Convention, I am confident that your ability and experience will facilitate this task and help ensure that the Council is able to perform its functions effectively. We share the principles that have been pronounced as a guide for the implementation thereof: searching for a consensus, exercising objectivity based on the letter of the Convention, addressing matters with transparency and in good faith, upholding mutual respect, and surmounting any differences through dialogue. For this reason, you have the support of my delegation during your mandate.

On the other hand, I would also like to express my support for and recognition of the task of the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat, which make it possible for the Organisation to carry out the functions entrusted to it by the Convention with dedication, professionalism, and independence.

We have assessed the draft report on the implementation of the Convention in 2019, which details the progress made in the destruction of the remaining declared chemical weapons stockpiles, the application and fortification of industrial verification, the expansion of international cooperation and assistance, the approach taken in confronting the challenged posed by chemical terrorism, and the implementation and maintenance of the OPCW's education and outreach activities. We welcome all of these achievements and recognise the work of the Organisation and the States Parties in bringing about these achievements.

However as stated above, regrettably, the work of the Organisation also continues to be dedicated to responding to the use of chemical weapons.

The possibility of the use of chemical weapons will only be eradicated when the complete elimination of chemical weapons has been verified. For that reason, it is also critical that all of the members of the international community come together and join the effort to achieve that goal and accede to the Convention.



The Convention provides tools for the international community to effectively confront emerging challenges. This can be seen in the agreement that was reached at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties concerning the first-ever activation of the procedure set out in Article XV of the Convention to amend its Annex on Chemicals. We trust that this timely response to new challenges will strengthen the fight against the proliferation of chemical weapons and lead to a safer world.

The new Centre for Chemistry and Technology (hereinafter, “the ChemTech Centre”) will doubtlessly serve as a great support for the capacities of the OPCW and its members in countering the potential use of chemical weapons and in preventing the proliferation thereof. Nevertheless, Argentina believes that special emphasis should be placed on capacity building and the socialisation of chemical developments so as to ensure that the new Centre will also have an impact on the development of each State Party and lead to improvements in the wellbeing of their societies.

For this reason, Argentina welcomes the progress made in the project’s design stage and expresses its gratitude to all of the countries that have contributed to its timely realisation.

Argentina continues to support the efforts made to promote national capacities via the provision of regional courses for Latin America and the Caribbean in specific fields. In 2019, the eighth advanced course for Latin America and the Caribbean on assistance and protection in responding to chemical emergencies was held; this course was jointly organised by the Government of Argentina and the OPCW, and was attended by over 20 participants from the region.

Furthermore, last September the National Authority of Argentina and the OPCW organised a subregional forum for interested stakeholders on strengthening the national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and cooperation in Latin America. This forum promoted an integrated approach to national implementation of the Convention, with a special focus on aspects of chemical security and protection and engaging the private sector.

In this regard, we would also underscore the fact that Argentina participated in the industry segment of the Associate Programme, demonstrating the commitment of all interested stakeholders to the objectives of the Convention.

Argentina seeks to make constructive contributions to improve the effectiveness of the Organisation. One example is the submission of a request concerning the method used to select other chemical production facilities for inspections in an effort to optimise the implementation of the chemical industry selection methodology in compliance with Article VI of the Convention, bearing in mind both the objective of a reliable verification as well as the effectiveness of the allocation of the Organisation’s resources.

We are pleased to learn from the Director-General’s report that the Secretariat has continued to apply the tenure policy without detriment to the operative effectiveness or the economic stability of the OPCW. We urge the Technical Secretariat to multiply its efforts to ensure gender parity among its members across all levels, as well as balanced regional representation.

Before I conclude, I would like to highlight the work of three Argentine nationals, two of which are women, who are members of various subsidiary bodies of the Organisation: the Advisory Body for Education and Outreach, the Scientific Advisory Board, and the Confidentiality Commission. I am confident that their professional suitability and vision will support the work of said bodies.

In closing, I would reiterate the unequivocal message that Argentina rejects the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance, as it constitutes a flagrant violation of the international obligations set out in the Convention. For this reason, I urge all members of this Council to work toward building a consensus to ensure the full respect for all of the provisions of the Convention and the creation of a world free of chemical weapons.

We request that this statement be considered an official document of this session and published on the OPCW's external server and website.

Thank you.

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