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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI MADAH
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF
VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW IN RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT BY BOLIVIA,
BRAZIL, CANADA, CHILE, COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS,
PARAGUAY, AND PERU MEMBERS OF THE SELF-PROCLAIMED "LIMA
GROUP" AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela categorically rejects the interrogations contained in the joint statement by the countries of the self-proclaimed “Lima Group”, which constitute an attack upon the sovereignty of a fully-fledged member of the OPCW and, as such, should be condemned.

These actions demonstrate the continued intent to use the Organisation in an effort to impose political interests that have nothing to do with the objective and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention, or with the mandate of the Organisation—and the States Parties should avoid such inappropriate actions.

The Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW once again wishes to underscore the principle that States, within their international relations, must abstain from threatening or using force against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any other State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The statement presented by a group of States Parties—which reduces in number each time—constitutes an attack upon multilateralism, which is the heart of international law. This dangerous precedent also serves as another example of the politicisation and polarisation of this Organisation, which is absolutely unacceptable.

Venezuela is a free and sovereign country that answers only to its people regarding internal affairs. The legitimate Government of Venezuela is run by President Nicolás Maduro, who was constitutionally elected on 20 May 2018 with 68 per cent of the votes in the elections from that period, at which 120 international observers were present.

As such, the only legal and legitimate Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW is that which has been exercised by its Permanent Representative for several years.

The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela requests that this statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Fourth Session of the Executive Council and published both on the Organisation’s external server, as well as its public website.

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