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**MOROCCO**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDELOUAHAB BELLOUKI  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO TO THE  
OPCW AT THE NINETY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Moroccan delegation, I have pleasure in welcoming Mr Agustín Vázquez Gómez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of El Salvador, as Chairperson of the Executive Council (“the Council”). I am convinced that your human and professional qualities, on which everyone agrees, will allow you to skilfully lead our discussions and help ensure that they result in a positive outcome. My delegation will offer all of its support to ensure the success of your mission. I should also like to express my heartfelt thanks and warmest congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Andrea Perugini, the Permanent Representative of Italy, for the masterful way in which he discharged his duties and for constantly working to create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and understanding within the Council.

I also have pleasure in renewing my delegation’s continued trust and support to the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr Fernando Arias, and to the staff of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”), for their dedication and for the measures taken during these difficult times marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that our session takes place under the safest possible conditions. The Director-General’s relevant and informative report remains as always a valuable source of inspiration for the successful conduct of our work.

It goes without saying that my delegation fully aligns itself with the statement of the African Group, delivered by our coordinator Ambassador Oji Nyimenuate Ngofa, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, and with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, delivered by Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan.

Morocco reiterates its call for building the capacities of States Parties, in particular developing ones, to ensure a balanced and optimal implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). In this framework, Morocco would underscore once again the importance of the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (“the Africa Programme”), and welcomes the constant commitment of the Director-General and the Secretariat towards Africa, a region in which implementation of the Convention still requires sustained efforts from all stakeholders.



As we warmly welcome the launch of the fifth phase of the Africa Programme, my delegation remains convinced that the Programme's Steering Committee, which met on 26 June 2020, will undoubtedly play an active role in the enrichment and optimal implementation of this Programme.

My country will work tirelessly to ensure the success of the Africa Programme in its fifth phase. In this regard it is essential to promote South-South cooperation aimed at mutual capacity building, while taking into account the specific realities of each State Party and each subregion.

Furthermore, my delegation welcomes the financial commitments made by several countries to voluntarily support the Africa Programme, and considers, like many other countries, that the stability of this initiative depends on a more stable and sustainable method of financing.

My country has noted with great interest the conclusions of the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), conclusions that present a great challenge to us all. In this connection, my country reiterates, in the strongest terms, its condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances, and for whatever reason. The perpetrators of this abominable and unjustifiable crime must be held accountable, in line with the relevant provisions of the Convention.

It is also within the framework of those provisions that the States Parties are called upon to continue working to forever eliminate the chemical threat. The current circumstances should, more than ever, compel us to promote constructive dialogue in order to consolidate the unity and integrity of the Organisation and to preserve its technical nature.

Furthermore, my delegation has taken note of the reports of the Declaration Assessment Team. My country is pleased to note the verified and complete destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, and encourages the continuation of a dialogue between that State Party and the Secretariat that is constructive and based on concrete results, to ensure optimal implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the relevant decisions on this subject, as well as to resolve all of the outstanding questions that remain unanswered.

Non-State actors remain a serious concern for all States Parties. My delegation underscores the usefulness of the work undertaken by the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, chaired by Ambassador Ngofa, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, and by the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, chaired by Ambassador María Teresa Infante, the Permanent Representative of Chile.

Finally, my delegation should like to express its full support for the efforts undertaken by the co-facilitators, Ambassador Laura Dupuy Lasserre, the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, and by Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus, the Permanent Representative of Australia, with a view to reconciling the different points of view on the issues related to organisational governance. In this connection, my delegation supports the commendable initiatives aimed at providing our Organisation with the tools it needs in order to fully and effectively discharge its responsibilities.

I thank you for your kind attention.

I would ask that this statement be considered as an official document of the Ninety-Fourth Session of the Council.