



**Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
The Hague**

STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
IRAN TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
6-9 October 2020
The Hague**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

**Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

At the outset, I would like to welcome you back, Ambassador Agustin VÁSQUEZ GÓMEZ of El Salvador as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. My delegation assures you of its full cooperation to tackle the issues under the current Covid-19 situation in the last EC Session of this year.

I would like to thank the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando ARIAS, for his comprehensive report delivered in this Session and wish to commend him and the Technical Secretariat for the work done by them

The Islamic Republic of Iran is associated to the statement delivered by Ambassador Fikrat AKHUNDOV, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OPCW on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The long aspiration of the international community realized upon the conclusion of the CWC in the 20th century, ensuring that another category of weapons of mass destruction would be eliminated entirely upon the entry into force of the Convention. The fundamental objective of the Convention to eliminate all chemical weapons remains yet to be realized.

There is no doubt that the total destruction remains a key concern of the international community due to the fact that the only remaining possessor State Party have not yet completed its destruction commitments. It is of fundamental importance that the only remaining possessor State Party accelerate the process of destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles and take all-out measures to complete destruction before the second scheduled timeline to comply fully with the decisions taken by PMOs.

There have been negative developments in the last couple of years on the efforts to strengthen the Convention. It is a matter of regret that short-term political interests of certain corners continue to overshadow our work and undermine the OPCW. Unsubstantiated allegation on the States Parties, Ultra Vires acts by the Organisation, politicisation of the work of technical and/or advisory bodies, unilateral actions versus collective decisions etc., are just examples of these negative developments.

The last session of the EC was pushed by a few countries for a decision to be taken by vote against a State Party. This decision does not correspond with realities on the ground. It is also a matter of serious concern that despite significant measures taken by the Syrian Arab Republic to destroy all its 27 chemical weapons production facilities and continuing cooperation with the Technical Secretariat the politically motivated decision entitled “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic” (EC-94/DEC.2, dated 9 July 2020) was adopted in the 94th EC Session. This counter-productive decision disregarded completely so far 82 monthly reports submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic to the OPCW, several rounds of bilateral meetings between the Syrian authorities and Technical Secretariat, a considerable amount of information provided by Syria, visits and other activities done in constant cooperation of the Syrian authorities with the Technical Secretariat.

The decision was not balanced and mostly based on the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) which its mandate, i.e. the so-called “attribution”, has not been mentioned either explicitly or implicitly in the Chemical Weapons Convention and is also inconsistent with the Convention. The IIT report is based upon unreliable open sources, invalid information and the chain of custody which has not been conducted appropriately in the work of the Team.

This destructive and unproductive trend supported by certain States Parties and started from the 4th Special Session of the Conference of States Parties on 26 June 2018 can tarnish the credit and reputation of this Organization in the future. Having neglected many factors involved in the territory of Syria facing with a most extraordinary situation in that country and losing sight of the facts such as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the missions and activities related to Syria, the decision, especially its 5th paragraph, by setting an artificial and unfair 90-day deadline, has complicated the situation and forced the Syrian Arab Republic in a position to take the responsibility of incidents and activities that were not under its control.

It is commendable that the Syrian Arab Republic despite all the false allegations and accusations and adoption of politicized decisions in the OPCW is still fully cooperating with the Technical Secretariat. It should also be noted that while the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is making every effort to have an effective cooperation with the Technical Secretariat, the terrorist groups in Syria continue their attacks against unarmed civilians to make the security situation extremely dangerous.

Therefore, in order to find a proper solution, it is necessary to refrain from taking any action that would complicate the Syrian Chemical dossier.

Mr. Chairman,

Upon the conclusion of Chemical Weapons Convention, States Parties agreed to establish an organisation mandated to implement the Convention in accordance with the constituencies agreed upon. The Convention sets full ranges of scenarios upon which States Parties might agree on certain proposals to strengthen the Convention in full conformity with its provisions. In this regard, we note the draft Decision EC-95/DEC/ CRP/ Rev.3 *entitled* “understanding regarding the aerosolized use of central nervous System- Acting Chemicals for law enforcement purposes.”

This draft decision regrettably suffers from technical ambiguity and legal uncertainty. Nevertheless, during the past decade, the ongoing progress of decision-making has triggered so rapid scattered decisions collection through unprecedented polarized voting which undermines the credibility and integrity of this solemn technical body. Furthermore, the recent decisions analysis shows that the concurrence of rapid politicization and slow deliberation have been creating favourable conditions for the upswing hasty technical-related decisions. It is obvious that the line between technical and political matters has become blurred. What is most striking in this technical body is the recognition and

incorporation of this technical turmoil into the representation of reaching a common understanding without compromising the integrity of the Convention in its entirety.

We are glad to inform that a joint working paper on the technical ambiguity and legal uncertainty in the draft decision was presented by the People's Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic which outlines the principled position of these States Parties on CNS-acting chemicals.

We hope that this Session of the Council provides an opportunity to discuss further all proposals and develop a common understanding on the next step. To that end, we are prepared to engage in a structural discussion to address all technical and legal aspects of the CNS-acting chemicals taking into account all views of States Parties. We underline that any hasty decision on this very important subject would be counter-productive and as it would lead to division among States Parties and compromise the letter and spirit of the Convention. In this regard, we fully associate with the sentiment expressed by the NAM States Parties and China on the need to continue dialogue in a comprehensive manner on this issue to achieve consensus which is important.

Mr. Chairman,

The full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI, a fundamental pillar of the Convention, yet remains to be realized. It is unfortunate that since the EIF of this instrument, no real progress achieved on the implementation of promotional and regulatory aspects of the provisions of Article XI. Non-compliance of States Parties shall not only be assessed in the light of the prohibitions of the Convention, but it shall be considered objectively through all provisions of the Convention including Article XI. In this regard, the long-standing principled position of the NAM States Parties and China as expressed in numerous occasions and outlined in its proposal "RC-3/NAT.1" shall thoroughly be discussed. The need for an action plan for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI has consistently expressed by the Group. Systematic denial by certain countries to engage constructively on this proposal shall be ceased.

Though it is clear that the Technical Secretariat activities are seriously affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, we are not satisfied that the budget allocated to the International Cooperation and Assistance Programme in the draft Budget and Programme for the 2021 compared to the same one in the previous year has been decreased with respect to some other Programmes.

It should be underlined that more than 100,000 victims of chemical weapons in my country who are now under unlawful unilateral sanctions are in urgent need of specific medicaments and treatment. We strongly reject imposing discriminatory restrictions and particularly unilateral sanctions against Member States of this Organization which directly affects the health and medication of the victims of chemical weapons as well as the development of the developing countries in the field of chemical activities for peaceful purposes.

The systematic unilateral sanctions also directly or indirectly have such an unavoidable impact upon some of the States Parties that make it difficult for them to meet all their obligations under the CWC. These unilateral coercive measures have deprived the victims of chemical weapons to have access to essential medicines. This inhumane action has increased the physical and mental sufferings of the victims more than ever especially when the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated this situation. We need now a tangible measure to be taken by the Organisation to alleviate the suffering of the victims of CW. The international community highly expects that we act together in responsible manner to assist those who are in dire need. To this end, in line with request of the NAM States Parties and China, we look forward to the the good offices of Director-General to assist the chemical weapons victims in whatever ways possible.

Mr. Chairman,

While considerable progress achieved in the universality of the Convention, but still this major instrument on WMD fails to achieve full universality as recalled by international community. We shall make all efforts necessary to ensure that normative rules of the Convention would be in place and these rules have been upheld by all without exception. It is a matter of serious concern that Israel regime, with huge number of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction systematically denies to accede to WMD instruments. In this regard, my delegation hereby, strongly calls on the few remaining outsiders to accede to the Convention without further delay and preconditions. We also emphasise that after two decades of the implementation of the CWC, the non-parties should not enjoy advantages and benefits it offers to States Parties.

Time and again, as it has been said in several occasions, the recent years non-consensual decisions shall not become a practice in the Organization where States Parties are committed to consult and cooperate with each other to achieve our common objectives enshrined in the Convention. We shall not push to divide further States Parties on issues that might ultimately compromise the objectives of the Convention. We would reach our final destiny “only and if”

States Parties committed to act together and ensure the integrity of decisions and uphold credibility of the OPCW.

In conclusion, I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Session and posted on the both OPCW's public and external websites.

Thank you.

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