



OPCW

Executive Council

Ninety-Fifth Session
6 – 9 October 2020

EC-95/NAT.32
6 October 2020
ENGLISH and FRENCH only

MOROCCO

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

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

To begin I should like to reiterate, on behalf of the Moroccan delegation, our full support of H.E. Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Permanent Representative of El Salvador, as Chairperson. Your human and professional qualities will, I am certain, guide the deliberations of this session of the Executive Council (“the Council”) to a successful outcome.

I should also like to express the full support of my delegation to the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr Fernando Arias, and to the staff of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) for their professionalism and dedication. The comprehensive and informative report presented by the Director-General for this session, which is very much appreciated by my delegation, is a valuable source of inspiration for our work. Furthermore, my delegation welcomes the measures that the Organisation has put in place to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which also allow the OPCW’s activities to be maintained under the right conditions.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement of the African Group, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Lawrence Lenayapa, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and with the statement of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

My country reiterates the importance of a balanced and optimal implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). Further, my country reaffirms its principled position in support of capacity building in the States Parties, particularly developing ones, to help them best comply with their obligations under the Convention and to face the current challenges.

In this framework, Morocco appreciates the initiative of the Director-General to implement the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa (“the Africa Programme”), in order to optimise Convention implementation on the African continent. In this regard, Morocco welcomes the work accomplished during the previous four phases of this Programme and expresses its strong commitment to working with all stakeholders to ensure the success of the fifth phase of the programme, as proposed in the recent Notes by the Director-General.



While taking account of the specific realities of each State Party and each subregion, the promotion of South-South cooperation aimed at mutual capacity building remains a central area to be developed. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the support provided by members of the Secretariat to help Morocco organise soon an online basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons for the countries of North Africa and the Sahel.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the continued success and positive momentum of the Africa Programme still depends on a more stable and sustainable method of financing. In this regard, my delegation renews its gratitude to the donors for their voluntary contributions.

Morocco expresses, in the strongest terms, its condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances, and for whatever reason. It is an unjustifiable act from any point of view. To achieve a world forever free from chemical weapons, and considering the current circumstances, the States Parties are called upon to continue working in earnest and to promote constructive dialogue in order to safeguard the norm, to strengthen the unity and integrity of the Organisation, and to preserve its technical nature.

My delegation has also taken note of the latest 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 constructive dialogue between that State Party and the Secretariat, to ensure the 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.

The threat of non-State actors remains a serious concern for all countries. In this connection, my delegation praises the usefulness of the activities undertaken by the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, with its new Chairperson H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, the Permanent Representative of South Africa, and by the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, chaired by H.E. Ambassador María Teresa Infante, the Permanent Representative of Chile.

My delegation supports the continuation of consultations led by the co-facilitators, H.E. Ambassador Laura Dupuy Lasserre, the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, and by H.E. 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. The success of these collective efforts will breathe new life into Convention implementation and will strengthen our Organisation to allow it to best discharge its responsibilities.

To conclude, I should like to warmly thank my brother, H.E. Ambassador Oji Ngofa, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, and his delegation, for the work he accomplished as Coordinator of the African Group throughout his tenure. Moreover, my sincere congratulations and best wishes go out to H.E. Ambassador Lawrence Lenayapa, the Permanent Representative of Kenya, who has recently taken up the duties of African Group Coordinator.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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