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KENYA

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP OF STATES PARTIES TO
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LAWRENCE LENAYAPA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO THE
OPCW AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 12**

Mr Chairperson,

At the outset, on behalf of the African Group, I would like to commend you and your Bureau for the skilful manner that you have continued to steer the deliberations of this session of the Council. We assure you of our continued support.

The African Group appreciates the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr Fernando Arias, for his comprehensive report on implementation of the Africa Programme in 2020 contained in his Note to the Council EC-95/DG.11, dated 10 September 2020. The Group also appreciates the Director-General and the staff of the Technical Secretariat, particularly those of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division who have continued to make great effort towards the realisation of the eight objectives of the Africa Programme.

Since the inception of the Africa Programme in 2007, commendable progress has been achieved under the various phases of the Programme. The Africa Group believes this has been due to the Technical Secretariat's wide and inclusive consultations with a variety of stakeholders. The Group looks forward to continued and regular engagement, including under the aegis of the Steering Committee, as part of the collaborative efforts to scale up the success of the Africa Programme.

The Group also looks forward to the attainment of further accomplishments under the fifth phase of this Programme, which commenced on 1 January 2020. Implementing the targeted programme impact assessment, results-based approach and embedding the Africa Programme targets in the annual workplan of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA) of the Secretariat, should no doubt contribute to this goal.

We call on the Technical Secretariat to continue sharpening the outcomes of the Africa Programme by continually adapting and developing tailor-made programmes that focus on regional and subregional priorities, including development of laboratory capacities and Centres of Excellence. Indeed, we welcome the innovative approach of seeking feedback from participants of the capacity-building programmes as one way of determining the specific areas



of need and of improvement, including during the regional meeting of the African National Authorities held virtually on 4 August, 2020, which focused amongst other issues on the implementation of the fifth phase of the Africa Programme. In this regard, we encourage continued regular engagement with the National Authorities.

The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the OPCW and the African Union is a framework to enhance cooperation between the two institutions. In this respect, we encourage further and regular engagement between senior officials of the OPCW and the African Union in order to strengthen cooperation between the two organisations in the implementation of the Convention. The participation of such officials at regional high-level forums will play a significant role in this respect. We welcome the development of an action plan aimed at streamlining the partnership and bilateral cooperation between the OPCW and the African Union Commission for the effective delivery of the Africa Programme, and look forward to its effective implementation.

Without a doubt the COVID-19 pandemic impacted most, if not all, areas of our lives and work, and the implementation of the Africa Programme was no exception. Despite this global challenge the Technical Secretariat put in place innovative measures to ensure the continuation of the capacity-building activities and deployed strategic level initiatives pertaining to the programme. The Group welcomes the efforts of the OPCW to adapt its programmes for delivery in the virtual format. Noting the challenges posed by remote learning, we look forward to resumption of in-person training activities as soon as the health situation allows.

Chairperson, the Africa Programme is largely funded by voluntary contributions. The Group takes this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude for all the voluntary contributors. We also recognise the effort made by the Technical Secretariat to define special projects for the Africa Programme and the commitment to undertake outreach activities for funding of the said projects. We appreciate the role that voluntary contributions have played in the continuation and success of the Africa Programme. We also appreciate the limitations that come with unpredictable funding. The Group, therefore, underscores the importance of funding the Africa Programme under the regular budget of the OPCW in order to guarantee its sustainability. We express our readiness to engage in discussions with the Technical Secretariat and other regional groups on this matter.

In conclusion, we reiterate the Africa Group's commitment to continue working with the Technical Secretariat and States Parties for the successful implementation of the Africa programme and funding it under the regular budget of the OPCW.

I thank you for your kind attention.

The African Group would like to request that this statement be published as an official document of this session.