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SAUDI ARABIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDULAZIZ BIN ABDULLAH
ABOHAIMED PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure to welcome you again, Mr Chairperson, Your Excellency Ambassador Agustín Gómez, and I am confident that your experience and wisdom will contribute to the success of the present session. We assure you of our support towards its successful conclusion. I wish also to express our appreciation to the Director-General for his comprehensive report, as well as to all the staff members of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. I also welcome the statement delivered by Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Convinced of the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention, my country attaches great importance to implementing its obligations under the Convention, in line with its consistent policy aimed at promoting cooperation on the prohibition and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Likewise, my country takes a keen interest in achieving the universality of the Convention, given its role in enhancing international peace and security. We urge States that have not yet done so to join the Convention.

While acknowledging the progress that has been made in the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons, my delegation notes that the discrepancies and inconsistencies in the Syrian initial declaration and subsequent submissions raise many questions. It calls on the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW in implementing all the decisions on the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

My delegation notes that the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), which is mandated to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe that the perpetrators of the use of sarin as a chemical weapon in Ltamenah on 24 and 30 March 2017, and chlorine as a chemical weapon in Ltamenah on 25 March 2017 were individuals belonging to the Syrian Arab Air Force. My delegation expresses its consistent position denouncing the use of



chemical weapons by anyone, and calls for holding the perpetrators accountable. It reiterates its support for the work of the IIT and calls upon the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the IIT, to grant the team access to the Syrian territory, and to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW in implementing Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2.

My delegation expresses its support for the proposed Draft Budget for 2021 submitted by the Director-General of the OPCW and calls upon the Member States to support it in order to enable the Organisation to fulfil its duties in the best manner.

My delegation calls for and encourages further consultations and discussions among Member States before adopting any decision pertaining to the proposal on the use of central nervous system-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes.

My delegation has reviewed proposals made by some Member States on the rules of procedure of the OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters. Our hope is that the Member States will reach consensus in upgrading and amending these rules, thereby enhancing transparency and achieving the required level of efficiency.

In conclusion, the Convention stresses the importance of economic and technological development, as well as international cooperation in chemical activities for purposes not prohibited thereunder. While acknowledging the efforts made in the past, we believe that further action is urgently needed in order to meet the requirements of Article XI of the Convention, in particular with respect to the transfer to developing States of technology, equipment, and expertise in chemical industries not prohibited under the Convention, as well as the removal of barriers imposed by many States in this regard. This will help promote international economic development for the benefit of all parties.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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