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MEXICO

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOSÉ ANTONIO ZABALGOITIA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES TO THE
OPCW AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Distinguished Representatives, Delegates,

The delegation of Mexico is fully confident that the leadership and extensive experience of the Chairperson of the Executive Council, Mr Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Ambassador of El Salvador, will ensure that the work of this Council culminates in a satisfactory report in line with the objectives of this august Organisation.

The Government of Mexico welcomes the report by Ambassador Fernando Arias, Director-General of the OPCW, the contribution that the work of the Technical Secretariat is making towards achieving a world free of chemical weapons and, above all, to encourage international cooperation based on technical and scientific progress in the field of chemistry aimed at well-being and development.

We reiterate our recognition of and support for the personnel of the Secretariat and the team of inspectors, who always demonstrate their commitment to the objectives and aspirations of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

My Government is convinced that in order to maintain international peace and security, we must recognise that global interdependence is irreversible. Only via international cooperation will we be able to confront the challenges we share and take advantage of opportunities to resolve them through collaboration, as demonstrated by the collective actions taken to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this spirit, attaining universality of the Convention will be the best demonstration that action on the part of the international community can help achieve the objectives of the Convention, and turn the mantra of Mexico and all those who are taking part in this format and the Conference of the States Parties into a reality:

“The total and unequivocal condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance.”

Preventing the re-emergence of these weapons, with support from the verification and inspection activities carried out by the international community and with a scientific basis, should be fundamental for building a world in which future generations do not live with the threat of chemical weapons.



Mexico notes the progress that has been made by the United States in its programme to destroy its stockpiles and expects that the delays attributed to COVID-19 will not stand in the way of completing the destruction of its stockpiles in the approved time frame. Likewise, we expect that the Governments of China and Japan will continue working on the identification and destruction of the chemical weapons abandoned on Chinese territory in line with the agreed programme.

With regard to the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, the Government of Mexico has taken note of the permanent communication maintained between the Government of Syria, the Technical Secretariat, and the Declaration Assessment Team.

While we recognise that there has been a certain amount of progress in clarifying the unresolved details in the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, just as reported both by the Director-General and the Syrian Government, we reiterate our call to the Syrian authorities to strengthen the channels of understanding in an effort to resolve the outstanding issues that still must be made to comply with the provisions of the Convention.

In short, the delegation of Mexico to the United Nations fully aligns itself with the work of the Security Council; in doing so, my Government makes clear its strong interest in and responsibility for the search for peaceful solutions to international conflicts. In this regard, and in recognition of the progress made in the implementation of decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 as presented in the Director-General's report, the Mexican delegation to our Organisation will be closely following the development of events in the Syrian Arab Republic with the aim of contributing to this nation's return to peace and understanding.

The delegation of Mexico, upon a foundation of international cooperation, reiterates its call to the States Parties and other local, regional, and international actors to facilitate the work of the Coordinator of the Investigation and Identification Team, with the aim of continuing to bring together relevant evidence and objectives that will make it possible to identify the origin of the chemical weapons used in the various incidents that have taken place on Syrian territory.

Mexico believes that the Draft 2021 Budget is well balanced in terms of its financial structure, as there will be no increase in the contributions from the States Parties; it trusts that the strategies of the Director-General, such as the biennial programme, capital expenditures, the modernisation of the technical and scientific laboratory, and the establishment of funds, will eventually support the goal of again having zero nominal growth in place.

In this same regard, my Government shares the regional concerns of Latin America about prioritising international cooperation, which is why we would like to see major financial and logistic support for the efforts of our regional group in the structure of the programme that will serve as a platform for the technical, scientific, and economic development of our hemisphere.

Finally, Mexico underscores that one of the objectives of the Convention is to ensure that chemistry is used exclusively for peaceful purposes, and that it is not used in toxic gaseous forms as a weapon, which is why it supports the idea that the Scientific Advisory Board carry out its investigations in an effort to objectively and precisely identify which toxic gases are capable of affecting the central nervous system, in order to encourage common efforts to prevent and control this type of chemical agent without affecting the peaceful use of chemistry in medical or agricultural products.

We request that this statement be considered a public and official document of this session and published on the OPCW's official website.

Thank you.

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