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**ARGENTINA**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE  
OPCW AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, Distinguished delegates,

I would first like to congratulate Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for his performance as Chairperson of this Council and the good experience obtained at the last session under the conditions imposed by the current situation.

Likewise, I would like to express my support for and recognition of the work of the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat, which, with dedication, professionalism, and independence, make it possible for the Organisation to carry out the functions assigned to it by the Convention.

My country has an unequivocal commitment to the policies of disarmament and non-proliferation, and cooperation in this area, which guarantees the sovereign right to research and development of technologies for peaceful purposes, in harmony with international commitments and national legislation.

In line with these commitments, we reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance is unacceptable and constitutes a flagrant violation of the international obligations set out in the Convention and international law, and that all those responsible for the use thereof must be held accountable.

The possibility of the use of chemical weapons will only be eradicated when the complete destruction of chemical weapons has been verified. For this reason, it is also fundamental that all the members of the international community join forces in order to achieve this goal and accede to the Convention.

We call upon all States to comply and continue to comply fully with the obligations of the Convention and the decisions of the Organisation, which will make it possible to achieve the fundamental objectives of both. For this reason, dialogue and a search for consensus must prevail.

We know that there are still challenges that, as the international community, we must take on in order to achieve the total elimination of chemical weapons. But we cannot forget that the Convention provides the tools we need to confront them effectively. This has been demonstrated in the agreement achieved at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of



the States Parties via the first-ever activation since the Convention's entry into force of the procedure set out in Article XV of the Convention concerning an amendment to the Annex on Chemicals. We trust that this timely response to new challenges will strengthen the fight against the proliferation of chemical weapons and will contribute to a more secure world.

Argentina will continue to support efforts to promote national capacities through regional courses for Latin America and the Caribbean in a variety of fields. In 2019, the eighth advanced course for Latin America and the Caribbean on assistance and protection in responding to chemical emergencies was organised jointly by the Government of Argentina and the OPCW, and was attended by over 20 participants in the region.

I would also like to underscore that the National Authority of Argentina and the OPCW organised a subregional stakeholders forum on advancing national implementation of the Convention and cooperation in Latin America, which promoted an integrated approach to national-level implementation of the Convention, with a special emphasis on the aspects of chemical security and protection, and involvement of the private sector. This is an accurate reflection of the active role that Argentina plays in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

We know that due to the conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic around the world, many of the activities scheduled for this year have been affected. Nonetheless, the OPCW has demonstrated its creative abilities and its willingness to adapt, which has made it possible to convert many of the in-person courses into a virtual format. This goes together with the commitment to continue building the capacities of the States Parties. We celebrate and recognise this important work.

My country looks to play a constructive role at the heart of this Organisation, bringing together proposals for the more effective and efficient performance of the Convention's implementation mechanisms. An example of such is the working document that was presented with the aim of optimising the implementation of the chemistry industry selection methodology in accordance with Article VI of the Convention; part of this proposal was approved and has meant a technical improvement recognised by the States Parties.

In order to continue strengthening the institutional structure of this Organisation, I call upon the Technical Secretariat to redouble its efforts to ensure gender parity at all levels, in addition to balanced geographical representation.

Before concluding, I would like to underscore the work of three Argentine nationals, two of which are women, who are part of various subsidiary bodies of the Organisation: Dr Adriana Bernacchi sits on the Advisory Board for Education and Outreach; Navy Captain Elma Biscotti is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board; and Maestro Mariano Enrico sits on the Confidentiality Committee. I am confident that their professional qualifications and their vision will contribute to the work of said bodies. I would like to conclude by calling upon all of the members of this Council to work and build a consensus that will ensure full compliance with all of the provisions of the Convention with the clear aim of advancing towards a world free of chemical weapons.