

**STATEMENT BY DR. MOHD NORHISYAM MOHD YUSOF,
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES
THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATION
OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate H.E. José Antonio Zabalgoitia Trejo of Mexico on his election as Chairperson of the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and assure Malaysia's full support and commitment in assisting you to achieve a successful conclusion. We would also like to thank H.E. Krassimir Kostov of Bulgaria for his able leadership throughout the Twenty-Fourth Session.

2. We are utterly grateful for the work of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat as well as their dedication to the implementation of the Convention, particularly in navigating the smooth coordination of important policy-making organs' sessions during these challenging times.

3. Malaysia aligns itself with the statement of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

4. The pandemic we are currently living in undoubtedly has raised a couple of overwhelming issues that definitely have changed the conventional way of fulfilling our mandate either as a State Party or as an Organisation. There is no better time than now when most of us are in isolation, to reflect the progress that we have made thus far. The situation has not only put a greater physical distance between us, but also made our efforts to reach consensus towards our goal of ensuring a world free of chemical weapons, more difficult.

5. In this connection, Malaysia is pleased to see that the discussion on the need for an enhanced OPCW contingency preparedness led by Germany has gained traction and is supportive of its ongoing consultation. Such need goes beyond the current COVID-19 situation, as other situations of similar nature are omnipresent. Malaysia believes that the Organisation must be fully equipped with the necessary financial, logistic and technological capabilities in ensuring the Organisation's business continuity amidst the current and future uncertainties.

6. In similar vein, we need to fully optimise the readily available resources within the Organisation and this includes soon-to-be-realised the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology – the ChemTech Centre. Malaysia applauds the States Parties that have contributed towards the establishment of this very important project,

both in political and financial capacities and is pleased to see that the financial gap is closing.

7. We are confident that the ChemTech Centre with its state-of-the-art facilities, will not only augment the Organisation's existing capacity to perform its core tasks but is also vital in providing space that could be used for business continuity purposes in case of operational disruptions of the OPCW. Its function as a knowledge and competence centre in the chemical field is particularly beneficial for the developing States Parties, and Malaysia views the establishment of the ChemTech Centre as a crucial step in strengthening the Organisation's capabilities to comprehensively address new and re-emerging chemical weapons threats. The new ChemTech Centre will also catapult capacity-building efforts for OPCW Member States, particularly in developing countries. Malaysia, for instance, is interested in fostering a partnership with ChemTech in advancing and sharing our expertise in the chemical field.

Mr. Chairperson,

8. Malaysia also takes pride of its collaboration with the OPCW in hosting the annual Assistance and Protection Course on Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents for Asian States Parties under the ambit of Article X of the Convention. Since its first hosting, Malaysia has prospered immensely in this subject matter as a State Party as well as a regional player. We are delighted and confident that the kind of expertise developed throughout the years can now be shared indispensably with other State Parties to ensure that the threats of the irresponsible usage of chemicals into chemical weapons can be curbed altogether.

9. Our discussion with the Technical Secretariat has turned into fruition as Malaysia hosted the first online Basic Course on Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents for Asian States Parties from 7 until 10 December 2020. This is another milestone that we have realised as we adapted to the new norms and prepared the online materials and video demonstrations so that the sharing can be done efficiently, albeit remotely.

10. Overall, course participants had the opportunity to view 14 pre-recorded videos including demonstrations on response, chemical weapon agents, reconnaissance, detection, evidence collection and personal protective equipment (PPE). Hence, we would like to convey our profound appreciation to the Assistance and Protection Branch, International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the OPCW for their trust in Malaysia for the last eight years and we wish to continue to host the same and other priority courses in the future.

Mr. Chairperson,

11. In keeping up with the scientific and technological advancement and increasing number of unprecedented challenges, Article XI is becoming more important than ever and therefore, the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is vital in ensuring the CWC remains relevant and attractive. One of the initiatives to address this issues effectively is the establishment of the Drafting Committee to work on an Action Plan based on the List of Ideas Emerged from the Article XI Workshops. In this connection, Malaysia would like to encourage the remaining regional groups

that have not submitted their nominations to the Committee to do so. We hope that this Drafting Committee will be able to commence its work as soon as possible in our effort to achieve tangible results in the implementation of Article XI.

Mr. Chairperson,

12. The Malaysian delegation acknowledges the differing views on the format of the Programme and Budget for 2021 and is concerned that the non-consensus adoption of OPCW Programme and Budget has become a norm rather than an exception for years to come. Nonetheless, we are pleased to see that States Parties' annual assessed contribution remains unchanged and wish that the Technical Secretariat will endeavour to continue the application of zero nominal growth in future budget formulation.

13. The challenging situation demands that we are creative in delivering our work and, against this backdrop, Malaysia welcomes the creation of the COVID-19 Variability Impact Special Fund that aims to sustain the Organisation's resilience as well as address the gap between the assessed contribution and the expectation in delivering the programmatic activities.

Mr. Chairperson,

14. Before concluding, Malaysia would like to reiterate our position that universality of the Convention is the strongest guarantee for chemical security, in light of the resurgence in the use of chemical weapons in recent years, the re-emergence of chemical warfare as well as the threat posed by chemical terrorism including those by non-States Parties and non-state actors.

15. While it is timely that we are focusing our efforts into non-compliance matter which could undermine the credibility of the Convention, we must not forget that universality underpins the achievement of a comprehensive, verifiable ban on chemical weapons, an over-arching goal that the drafters of the Convention had envisioned more than 20 years ago. Both efforts of achieving universality while safeguarding compliance, unquestionably must go hand in hand.

16. I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Conference and be published on the OPCW website and extranet.

Thank you.