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ALGERIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LOUNÈS MAGRAMANE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

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

I should like to begin by expressing to Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Permanent Representative of El Salvador, the great pleasure of the Algerian delegation at seeing you once again as Chairperson of this session of our Executive Council (“the Council”) which, we recall, is being held under special circumstances linked to the fight against the COVID-19 health crisis. You can count on the full readiness of my delegation to help you succeed in your mission and ensure the success of our work.

I also pay a warm tribute to the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his highly informative opening statement and for his continuous efforts to strengthen the OPCW, to help it accomplish its primary mission to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”).

I cannot miss this opportunity to also express my sincere thanks to the members of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) for their efforts aimed at giving full expression to implementation of the Convention.

We have listened to the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, delivered by H.E. Mr Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and that of the African Group, delivered by H.E. Mr Lawrence Lenayapa, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya, with which my delegation fully aligns itself. I should like to wish every success to my brother and colleague, the Ambassador of Kenya, in his new mission as coordinator of the African Group.

Admittedly this Ninety-Fifth Session of the Council has been convened under special circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 health crisis, but nevertheless our efforts must be marked by a spirit of solidarity and adaptation to the circumstances in order to see us through these difficult times. In this respect, I should like to pay tribute to the medical staff in our respective countries for their efforts and sacrifices during this period.



Indeed we live in a world in which, more than ever before, we face multiple dangers. And now this period has come, this time against a backdrop of global instability. In addition to conflicts and tensions, it has been marked by the arrival of an invisible enemy, the coronavirus, which has upended the normal order and led humankind back to its true worth, with no other way but to live together in peace.

I should like to point out that Algeria has worked tirelessly to create an atmosphere of trust within the international community. We must consolidate all of our gains and use the multilateral framework at our disposal to mobilise the means of action to build the international order that we wish to be stable, safe, and supportive.

In this connection, we are convinced that the OPCW, a mainstay of the global architecture for peace, will be able to create the conditions needed to establish this international order and make its progress towards realising the objectives of peace and security more tangible.

This dimension, which is in line with our potential and our desire to secure a prosperous future for the coming generations, requires the OPCW to ensure the implementation of concrete guarantees as the legal framework for monitoring and controlling compliance with the obligations already undertaken within the framework of the Convention.

With regard to the Syrian chemical file, my delegation continues to follow closely the developments around this issue, while reiterating its call for a consensual outcome that takes account of the positions of all parties concerned, far removed from any doubts and other political biases that might chip away at all of the OPCW's achievements. The call from many countries, including Algeria, to preserve the purely technical nature of the work of our Organisation is more edifying now than ever before.

Besides the unacceptable and reprehensible nature of any use of chemical weapons, by whomever, and for whatever reason, the OPCW is at a pivotal moment in its history, which will determine its future relevance within the global peace and security architecture, in keeping with the mandates of each institution.

This is a good opportunity to reiterate the unequivocal position of my country and its thorough and unreserved condemnation of any use of chemical weapons, by anyone and under any circumstances. With regard to the outstanding issues, Algeria encourages the stakeholders to foster dialogue to overcome all of the obstacles and to adopt a constructive approach that will allow for inclusive solutions to be found.

Algeria believes that the increasing polarisation of the OPCW's work makes it harder to find solutions that could make the objectives of the Organisation more achievable.

We have paid close attention to the various points of view on the Syrian declaration, and we note with satisfaction the progress made by the Secretariat and the Syrian authorities to clarify all of the issues deemed to be outstanding in regard to this declaration.

With regard to the issue of the Draft Programme and Budget of the Organisation for 2021, the Algerian delegation has closely followed the discussions, both formal and informal, that have been held within the context of facilitations led by Poland and Switzerland, and considers that the financial health of the OPCW should be one of our top concerns, given that this issue could have existential consequences for our Organisation. My delegation considers that the financial package submitted within the framework of an omnibus draft decision, which was subject to a vote, contains some elements that might drive us apart in our search for desired solutions.

At a time of increasing debate within the Organisation on chemical terrorism and its impact on international peace and security, the OPCW is faced with a true challenge, namely, that is related to the development of new generations of chemical weapons which, in our view, requires particular attention from the international community, which must find the place and means to curb this threat and to prevent terrorist groups from possessing these chemical weapons.

In this regard, we encourage H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, the Permanent Representative of South Africa, who has just taken up a new mission as chairperson of the working group on terrorism. Here we offer our full support and encouragement, and we are convinced that he will be able to find the necessary means to fight this scourge, in compliance with and in strict implementation of the obligations undertaken within the framework of the Convention.

Within the framework of implementation of Article VII of the Convention, and based on its own experience, Algeria is committed to supporting any efforts of the Secretariat and the States Parties that could help the African States Parties that have not yet adopted Convention implementing legislation.

In this regard, my delegation hopes that the Organisation will continue its efforts to pay particular attention to the Africa Programme in its fifth phase, and fully supports any activities aimed at advancing this Programme, in particular by strengthening institutional cooperation between the OPCW and the African Union.

Capacity building in Africa through the future Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) will be another objective that Algeria sincerely hopes to be achieved.

Algeria wishes to draw attention to the need to increase focus on strengthening measures of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, envisaged under Article X of the Convention, in particular in cases of chemical attacks and accidents.

We also make an appeal for the promotion of technological cooperation and the exchange of good practices to ensure that all States have the ability to use chemistry for peaceful purposes, as laid down in Article XI of the Convention.

In this connection, we invite the Secretariat to increase its focus on specialised training cycles and on providing the necessary equipment to laboratories to allow them to develop their chemical analysis capabilities.

The Secretariat has a large role to play in strengthening the capacities of the National Authorities of States Parties in regard to Convention implementation, to allow them to face such challenges.

To conclude, I would ask that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Council and that it be posted on the Organisation's website.

I thank you for your attention.

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