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MEXICO

**STATEMENT BY MR MAURICIO TORRES CÓRDOVA
MINISTER AND ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished representatives,
Delegates,

The delegation of Mexico expresses its gratitude to the States Parties, the staff of the Technical Secretariat, and all those who have helped make holding this Conference possible under the difficult conditions and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We recognise the hard work and dedication of the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Krassimir Kostov of Bulgaria, who efficiently managed the work of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Likewise, we have noted the opening statement and report on 2019 activities presented by the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias.

Today, multilateralism is facing challenges that pose difficulties to our aspirations to achieve international peace and security. For this reason, the Government of Mexico, in line with its diplomatic tradition in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, reiterates its willingness to contribute to ensure that this Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons brings us even closer to accomplishing our goals.

It is important to note that the entry-into-force of the Chemical Weapons Convention marked a milestone—a before and after—in disarmament that we must honour. Overcoming the challenges encountered over the course of more than 23 years demonstrates the relevance of the Convention and the Organisation. This treaty is an example of successful multilateralism and is currently very close to achieving the total elimination of declared chemical weapons in compliance with the Convention.

Mexico vehemently and categorically condemns the use of any weapon of mass destruction, and in particular the use of chemical weapons, anywhere, anytime, for any reason, and under any circumstances. The use of this type of weapon is a crime and a grave violation of international law, international humanitarian law, human rights, and unquestionably the provisions of the Convention.



Mexico recognises the progress achieved in the destruction of chemical weapons by all possessor States. Nevertheless, my Government is concerned that there still exist production and storage facilities that must be eliminated, as well as abandoned weapons that must be located and destroyed, old weapons that continue to be discovered in various States Parties, and incomplete declarations that must be updated as soon as possible. Above all, we are concerned that nerve agents have recently been used in States that are party to the Convention.

Mexico has been following the activities of the Fact-Finding Mission and the Investigation and Identification Team with regard to the incidents that have taken place in the Syrian Arab Republic, where the use of chemical weapons has been alleged. We expect that these efforts will culminate in the identification of the perpetrators and that it will be possible to bring them to justice. Likewise, Mexico calls for the continuation of the talks between the Declaration Assessment Team of the OPCW and the Syrian authorities in order to clarify the inconsistencies that persist in Syria's initial declaration. We reaffirm the importance of Syria's compliance with all the provisions of the OPCW and its obligations as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Equally, we recognise the Technical Secretariat's support for Germany, as well as that offered to the Russian Federation in the case of Alexei Navalny. We recognise Russia's willingness to conduct an investigation with the support of OPCW inspectors. We trust that the States involved will continue to cooperate with the Organisation in order to diligently clarify the facts.

Mexico also cautions that there has not been progress in universalisation for many years. We urge the four States that have not yet acceded to the Convention to consider joining. We call upon those that are part of this multilateral regime to liberate the world from this type of weapon of mass destruction for the good of humanity and their own people.

The Government of Mexico supports the adoption of the OPCW's 2021 Programme and Budget in order to continue pursuing the object and purpose of the Convention. We are pleased to observe that resources have been allocated to the key areas of the OPCW in order to confront the challenges that we face in current circumstances—those related to COVID-19, among others. Nevertheless, we reiterate the need to provide more financial resources for activities in international cooperation, especially those supporting the establishment of programmes for Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia.

The Organisation's transition process has turned out to be more complex as States Parties have begun to stray from the good practice of consensus, which is why it is important that draft decisions are duly substantiated and that all the relevant aspects of a decision are laid out and analysed, with the aim of ensuring that the objectives of said initiatives are positive for all.

Mexico invites the States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to achieving the complete verification of the destruction of chemical weapons in 2023, a regime to prevent their re-emergence, and the full clarification of outstanding issues in initial declarations.

Mexico hopes that we will be able to achieve these goals with a view to ensuring that the OPCW, while continuing to supervise compliance with the regime of non-proliferation and the prohibition of dual-use substances for criminal purposes, grows stronger as an organisation that promotes the peaceful use of chemistry to the benefit of the economic development of States Parties, which will in turn contribute to establishing a more secure and stable world.

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

Thank you.