



Statement of H.E. Haifa Aissami Madah, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW in response to the joint statement of Canada, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay and Peru, members of the self-appointed "Lima Group"

**At the Ninety-Sixth Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
The Hague, 9-12 March 2021.**

1. The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela categorically rejects the affirmations contained in the joint statement of the countries of the self-appointed "Lima Group", which are an attack on the sovereignty of a full member of the OPCW and; therefore, must be condemned.
2. Such actions constitute a continuing attempt to use the Organization in an effort to impose political interests that have nothing to do with the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention nor the mandate of the Organization, and the States Parties should avoid such inappropriate actions.
3. The Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW once again wishes to emphasize the principle that States, in their international relations, must abstain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
4. The statement presented by an ever-decreasing number of States Parties constitutes an attack on multilateralism, which is the heart of international law. This dangerous precedent is also another example of politicization and polarization of this Organisation, which is absolutely unacceptable.
5. Venezuela as a free and sovereign country only responds to its people about its internal affairs. The legitimate Government of Venezuela is the one led by President Nicolás Maduro, who was constitutionally elected on May 20, 2018 with 68 percent of the votes casted in those elections, which were witnessed by 120 international observers.
6. Therefore, the only lawful and legitimate representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW is the exercised by its Permanent Representative for several years.

The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela request that this Statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Sixth Session of the Executive Council and be posted on both the external server and the public website of the Organisation. -