



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

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ARABIC and ENGLISH only

**IRAQ**

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF IRAQ TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,

It is a pleasure for me and my delegation to extend our warmest congratulations to you, Mr Chairperson, and the Vice-Chairpersons on your election to the chairmanship of the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are fully confident that your extensive diplomatic expertise will lead to the success of the Conference. My delegation also reiterates its support for Mr Fernando Arias, the Director-General of the OPCW, and confirms its readiness to cooperate with him to ensure a successful conclusion of the current session and all activities of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, and iron out difficulties in order to bring closer together views and opinions that would lead us to the adoption of successful decisions, thereby promoting international peace and security.

Despite the enormous challenges it has faced recently, Iraq managed to implement its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention ahead of time. Iraq announced the destruction of remnants of the former chemical programme and was issued a certificate by the OPCW Director-General to that effect (in March 2018). Therefore, my delegation would like to express its profound gratitude for the efforts made by the OPCW, represented by its Director-General and Technical Secretariat. We also thank the inspection teams which visited Iraq and demonstrated high professionalism and fruitful cooperation with the Iraqi national authorities. We would also like to thank all Member States and all those who have supported and assisted Iraq in achieving that goal.

My delegation expresses its deep concern at the recent use of toxic chemicals and strongly condemns any use of such chemicals, anywhere, and at any time. We recall that Iraq suffered from the use of chemical weapons during its war on the ISIL terrorist gangs, which targeted civilians and security forces, leaving more than 2,500 casualties. We therefore call upon the OPCW and the States Parties to support the Iraqi Government in providing medical and psychological services to those casualties and establishing a health centre or hospital specialised in the treatment of toxic chemical agent injuries.

Iraq also stresses the need that recruitment of staff members at the Technical Secretariat should be in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which states that due regard should be paid to equitable geographical representation and gender equality. To this end, Iraq considers that one of the most effective ways to achieve this goal



would be for the Technical Secretariat to develop appropriate mechanisms for financing a vocational training programme for junior staff, which will enable candidates from all geographical groups to have easy access to professional positions in the Technical Secretariat. Since its accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Republic of Iraq has never had the chance to be represented in the body of OPCW staff members, despite the many requests made by the Iraqi Representation.

Iraq reaffirms its constant position that the OPCW should be distanced from any attempts to politicise its work, and should preserve its character as a technical organisation. Furthermore, Iraq firmly believes that we all have a responsibility to implement the conventions and treaties on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, and stresses that we should all restore the principle of consensus within the Organisation and constructive cooperation to achieve its objectives.

The OPCW has proven to be an efficient instrument in the verification of stringent procedures relating to security and safety issues concerning chemical weapons and remaining chemicals. Therefore, the Government of Iraq supports any international efforts aimed at preventing the use of such weapons by anyone.

The entire world is going through exceptional circumstances due to the coronavirus pandemic, and we all have a shared responsibility that requires further action to ensure the business continuity of the Organisation, in order to achieve its goal of a world free of chemical weapons. In this respect, Iraq will support the OPCW Budget for 2021.

My Government firmly believes that it is our collective responsibility to implement the conventions and treaties on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons. In this regard, the Government of Iraq supports the efforts being made to achieve the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention as soon as possible, as the only framework and international instrument through which a world free of chemical weapons can be realised. It renews its call to the States that have not yet acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible and place their relevant facilities and sites under the verification of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

I request that this statement be adopted as an official document of this Conference and be posted on the official website of the Organisation.