



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Fifth Session
20 – 22 April 2021 (Part II)

C-25/NAT.82
20 April 2021
ENGLISH only

KENYA

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LAWRENCE LENAYAPA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 20: THE OPCW PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA**

Mr Chairperson,

The African Group wishes to commend you and the General Committee for efficiently guiding the deliberations of this session of the Conference of the States Parties. The Group assures you of its support.

The Group is grateful to the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat for their diligence and hard work in the implementation of the OPCW Programme for Africa. We welcome the report on the implementation of the Africa Programme in 2020 contained in Note C-25/DG.9 EC-95/DG.11, dated 10 September 2020.

Over the past thirteen years since the inception of the Africa Programme in 2007, we have witnessed incremental progress from one phase to the next. More recently the Technical Secretariat has defined special projects for the Africa Programme. The tangible progress in the Programme's implementation can be attributed to the Technical Secretariat's commitment, as well as to the wide and inclusive consultations with a variety of stakeholders.

Continually reviewing, adapting, and developing tailor-made programmes that focus on regional and subregional priorities will help to sharpen the outcomes of the Africa Programme. In this regard, the Group encourages the Technical Secretariat to regularly obtain feedback from National Authorities and participants of the capacity-building programmes.

The Group welcomes the efforts of the OPCW to adapt its international cooperation and assistance programmes for delivery in virtual format following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Noting the challenges posed by remote learning, the Group looks forward to the resumption of in-person training activities as soon as the public health situation allows.

The African Group values the holding of the regional meeting of the African National Authorities in virtual format on 4 August 2020 and the two meetings of the Programme's Steering Committee held on 26 June 2020 and 16 November 2020, which addressed the implementation of the fifth phase of the Africa Programme. We look forward to continuing regular engagement with the OPCW.



The Group is convinced that implementing targeted Programme impact assessment, a results-based approach, and embedding the Africa Programme targets in the annual workplan of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA), will contribute to further accomplishments under the fifth phase of this Programme, which commenced on 1 January 2020.

Robust cooperation between the African Union and the OPCW is important for the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa. The Group therefore encourages regular engagement between senior officials of the OPCW and the African Union, as well as their participation in regional high-level forums within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the OPCW and the African Union. The Group welcomes the development of an action plan aimed at streamlining the partnership and bilateral cooperation between the OPCW and the African Union Commission for the effective delivery of the Africa Programme and looks forward to its effective implementation.

At present, the Africa Programme is partially funded under the regular budget and partially through voluntary contributions. The Group reiterates its appreciation to the States Parties that have made voluntary contributions, and for the role that these contributions have played in the continuation and success of the Africa Programme. While voluntary funding has had positive impacts on the Programme, it also has inherent challenges such as unpredictability, which would impact the sustainability of the Programme. The Group therefore underscores the importance of funding the Africa Programme under the regular budget of the OPCW in order to guarantee its sustainability. The Group looks forward to engaging with the Technical Secretariat and other regional groups on this matter.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, we reiterate the African Group's commitment to continue working with the Technical Secretariat and States Parties for the successful implementation of the Africa Programme and funding it under the regular budget of the OPCW.

I thank you for your kind attention.

The African Group would like to request that this statement be published as an official document of this session.

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