

**Statement on behalf of the Group of African States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) delivered by the Coordinator of the Group, H.E. Mr. Lounès Magramane, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Algeria to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**

**Ninety -Eight session of the Executive Council (The Hague, 5 -8 October 2021)**

**Agenda subitem 10 h**

**Mr. Chairperson,**

On behalf of the Group of African States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), I would like to commend, you and your bureau for the skilful manner that you steer the deliberations of this session of the Executive Council.

The African Group appreciates the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias and the Staff of the Technical Secretariat, for their continuing efforts towards promoting international cooperation and assistance in many areas, despite the challenges of the Covid- 19 pandemic.

The Group commends the progress made during this session towards addressing the matter of transfer of funds out of the International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) Programmes by the inclusion, in the decision on Programme and Budget of the OPCW (2022- 2023), of a paragraph on this issue.

We note with satisfaction that the decision highlights the importance of International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) as a core operational programme of the OPCW, and note that in past years there have been several transfers of not fully utilised funds out of the ICA, in accordance with the Financial Rules and Regulations.

As mentioned in the decision, we reiterate our call upon the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to work collectively to ensure the full and effective implementation of the ICA programmes, in order to avoid or to reduce the need for transfers between major programmes, including consideration of the retention of unspent funds for ICA in a special fund.

We would like on that occasion, to express our thanks to all the delegations for their constructive engagement and their support to the proposal of the African Group.

Our thanks go also to the Co- facilitators and the Technical Secretariat for their availability, full engagement and the professional support provided to all the delegations during the consultations on this issue, despite the short time.

We remain ready to engage in any further consultations on how to address this matter and implement the relevant recommendation.

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.