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ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE
OPCW AT THE NINETY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished colleagues,

Please accept my warmest welcome, Ambassador Bellouki, and my congratulations on your election as Chairperson of the Council. I wish you success in your work, and I am confident that the Argentine delegation will undertake its role as a member of this body, as is the tradition, with a constructive spirit and determination to preserve the impartiality and technical nature of this Organisation.

I thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the documents under analysis. In this regard, it bears mentioning that the documents submitted for consideration were not available for timely review by the capitals. I therefore reiterate the need to have documents translated into the six official languages sufficiently in advance.

Please allow me, Mr Chairperson, to briefly mention two of the issues that bring us here. This concerns the composition of the Secretariat and the policy on staff retention, i.e., the tenure policy. In this regard, my delegation aligns itself, clearly, with the statement expressed by GRULAC.

The geographical imbalance across the posts held in the Secretariat is not only substantial—it is also persistent. The numbers reported in the documents under consideration speak for themselves. Even when candidates from our region are nominated, the posts are assigned to nationals from other geographic regions.

It is essential that we reverse this situation, and for this reason we renew our call to make the best efforts to do so.

In this regard, reforming the contract policy (i.e., the staff tenure policy) that is being negotiated should not lead to the normalisation of the current situation, but instead should serve as an opportunity to reverse it. We fully understand that the submitted proposal has its merits, but it should go hand-in-hand with a specific compromise to balance the situation. We will participate in these negotiations with a constructive spirit, confident that our region has enormous potential to contribute to this Organisation.

In this regard, please allow me, Mr Chairperson, to welcome and support the work of the Office of Internal Oversight, the report of which is now under consideration.



I would like to close by calling upon all the members of this Council to work and build a consensus to ensure full respect for all the provisions of the Convention with the clear objective of advancing towards a world free of chemical weapons.

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