

Statement by
Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the OPCW at the 26th Session of the Conference of States Parties
(29 November- 03 December 2021)

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome you at the helm of the 26th session of Conference of States Parties. We are confident in your ability to guide our work effectively. My delegation will extend full cooperation and support to you in your work.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the States Parties belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

Mr. Chairman,

This year, again, we continue our work under unusual circumstances and still hoping that it would not be long before we would return to business as usual. While the Secretariat is doing commendable work under difficult conditions, more innovative ways need to be improvised to allow delegations to make their national statements in-person as is being done in other conferences elsewhere in the world.

We also commend the work done by Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias to deliver in these challenging times. We support his re-election. We hope that in his second term despite the challenges faced in the wake of eroding consensus, DG Arias would continue to work under the guidance of States Parties to fulfill the responsibilities of the position as enshrined in the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

The CSP is a moment to reinforce global support and commitment to the aims and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). In the difficult and fractured world of multilateral disarmament, the annual Conferences in the past always showed the way through its “consensus” based decision making. Lack of consensus, Mr. Chairman, as history and practice tell us, is not beneficial for global disarmament and would not yield anything except politicization and hollow grandstanding. The CSP provides us an important inflection point to think beyond politics and for the larger good of humanity. Regrettably, there is little reassurance in the lead up to the 26th CSP. It

remains our hope that the traditional strength of the OPCW to progress through dialogue and consensus will sought to be restored during this session of the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The single most important goal of the OPCW is the total verified destruction of chemical weapons from the world. We still await reaching the target. We hope that the goal would soon be completed and that all abandoned chemical weapons would also be completely eliminated.

There cannot be any reluctance to condemn the use of chemical weapons nor to investigate credible reports of such use. However, these cannot become justifications for arbitrary actions that have no basis in the Convention. Progressive erosion in the integrity of the Convention must stop for the sake of maintaining global support for this unique disarmament treaty.

Irrespective of the merits of the issue, the manner in which the CNS-acting chemicals has been handled is a classic case of how the policy making organs of the OPCW must never conduct business. Needless to say that any decision that does not have the support of a State Party creates no obligations whatsoever for that member. Obligations can only be modified or interpretations effected either through consensus or through the amendment procedures laid down in the Convention.

We have read the Director General's reports on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. We understand that the pandemic also affected Secretariat's work in this area. It is crucial to continue constructive engagement with Syria not losing sight of accomplishments that resulted from unity of purpose and Syria's cooperation. It is in this spirit that Pakistan supports continuation of constructive engagement between Syria and Technical Secretariat for early resolution of all outstanding matters in the line with the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

The budgetary proposal's departure from the practice of Zero Nominal Growth, its use to support implementation of the controversial C-SS/Dec.3 decision for another year, and in the last 6 years transfer of considerable resources out of International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) Programme does not augur well. The transfer of funds has affected the African Group most and Pakistan supports the call by the African Group to ensure full and effective implementation of the ICA Programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

In terms of constructive steps that will enhance the effectiveness of the OPCW, Pakistan appreciates the leadership of the Director-General in the progress on the state-of-the-art Chem-Tech Centre. We supported the idea from the beginning and also contributed financially towards its establishment. We hope that once built, this project will significantly enhance the capabilities and standing of the OPCW as the global leader in the effort to rid the world of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan has consistently worked for the national implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention objectives. Pakistan will continue to stress that the Convention is implemented in the manner that promotes the economic and technological interests of all States Parties and we believe that investment in this field will strengthen the interests of a large number of States Parties in the Convention in future.

Pakistan hopes that OPCW would revert to the tradition of consensus and continue to hold the Convention as a guide to achieve its vision of a world free of chemical weapons and the threat of their use, and in which chemistry is used for peace, progress, and prosperity of our future generations.

Thank you
