



OPCW

Executive Council

Ninety-Sixth Session

9 - 12 March 2021

EC-96/NAT.10

9 March 2021

ENGLISH only

BANGLADESH

STATEMENT BY H. E. AMBASSADOR M RIAZ HAMIDULLAH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General Fernando Arias,
Deputy Director-General Odette Melono,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, I welcome Ambassador Agustín Vázquez Gómez as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. My delegation is confident that, with your wisdom and leadership, the deliberations at this session will come to a successful conclusion.

Allow me also to commend the Director-General for his comprehensive statement. Also, the Vice-Chairpersons for their respective reports presented at this session. The Director-General and his team in the Technical Secretariat deserve our appreciation for their efforts to ensure full and effective implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”).

The Bangladesh delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Convention and China.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has led to an unprecedented, prolonged situation that is transforming the socio-economic dynamics. Bangladesh is no exception in terms of battling the challenges. We would urge all the States Parties to continue cooperation under the Convention, especially in the field of innovation and information led science and technology.

Bangladesh strongly condemns, any use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere. We reaffirm that those responsible must be held accountable. We would like to reiterate our long-standing principled position towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. We also reiterate that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals, as a weapon, is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention and all norms of international law.



Considering the Convention as a model treaty, Bangladesh upholds the norm of “never again”; and emphasise that “consensus” and “cohesion” among the States Parties are key in our quest for non-proliferation and prevention of the use or re-emergence of chemical weapons, anywhere and under any circumstance.

Bangladesh is keen to see substantive progress in the Executive Council’s Chairperson-led coordination mechanism, ongoing facilitations and the activities of open-ended working groups for revitalising the existing facilitations in the advancement of the objectives and purpose of the Convention. We appreciate their enormous contribution in advancing the process; and remain committed to extending all our support in attaining tangible outcomes from their efforts.

As we stand in 2021, Bangladesh looks forward to the Convention’s entry into post destruction phase in 2023 and beyond. We acknowledge the progress made in the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile in the United States of America and the development in the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) of Japan in China. We are hopeful that sustained attention in destruction of the stockpiles and the ACW, well before the Convention enters into the post-destruction phase.

Heading the post-destruction phase, Bangladesh would need more support in ensuring peaceful use of chemistry for the well-being of our people. This is also crucial for conceptualising a safe and sustainable chemical industry, in the context of attaining the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals. We have long been emphasising the importance of enhancing economic and technological development of all States Parties.

Within the purview of the Convention, Bangladesh urges for enhanced international cooperation and exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of chemical activities and the promotion of free trade in chemicals. Access to the knowledge and technology remain a key challenge for low-income developing countries, like Bangladesh. For universal implementation of the Convention, developing countries like Bangladesh need support in capacity building with necessary knowledge and technology. We need support in the building capacity of our relevant institutions, education and outreach to chemical industry and also research/academia/students of chemistry, chemical engineering, biochemistry at university levels. We would call on the Technical Secretariat to consider capacity building in the developing countries in scientific development through effective cooperation and innovative means, especially in the areas of chemistry and biology.

To the Technical Secretariat and the OECD countries, Bangladesh would again call for robust laboratory twinning programme. This is important to complement the capacity-building efforts of the States Parties like ours as our economies grow.

Like other Member States, Bangladesh values the ChemTech Centre project, and we eagerly await operationalisation of our very own project. Bangladesh reiterates its full support to the project and would further like to appeal to others for their generous contribution to such a just cause. In that regard, we acknowledge the generous contribution of the host country, The Netherlands, and from numerous other States Parties.

A gender balanced organisation with geographical diversity in staff can best represent the international nature and integrity of the OPCW. We appreciate the leadership of the Director-General in making progress in this regard, particularly in ensuring gender parity at the Organisation’s top structure. We firmly believe that geographical diversity would further

strengthen the Organisation and promote it as a true international organisation. We would request the Technical Secretariat to come up with innovative solutions or ideas to accommodate a balanced approach in ensuring due balance in gender and geographic representation, at every possible level. Bangladesh supports the ongoing facilitation on organisational governance issues, and I do hope that the Technical Secretariat would be able to roll out pragmatic programmes like scholarships for interns and Junior Professional Officers from the developing countries. This is crucial to foster geographical diversity in the Organisation as also to contribute to the promotion of peaceful use of chemistry in those countries.

Mr Chairperson, as I conclude, we would stress on our collective commitment to the full implementation of the Convention to lead us to a safer and secure world. As an original signatory of the Convention, Bangladesh values the culture of consensus-based decision-making and remain committed to serve in the OPCW with the spirit of “never again”.

I would request that this statement be circulated as an official series document of the Ninety-Sixth Session of the Executive Council.

Thank you.

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