



OPCW

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EL SALVADOR

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR TO
THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson of the Executive Council,
Your Excellency, Mr Director-General,
Your Excellencies, Permanent Representatives,
Members and observers of the Executive Council,
Distinguished authorities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons,

I would like to direct my initial words to express to you, Ambassador Abdelouahab Bellouki, Chairperson of the Executive Council, the recognition and gratitude of my country for the impeccable work carried out under your management of the work of the Council. The delegation of El Salvador reaffirms its willingness to fully support your chairmanship, and trusts that through your leadership, we will see a successful outcome for the items on the agenda of this Ninety-Eighth Session of the Executive Council.

Likewise, El Salvador extends its appreciation to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council, and the staff of the Technical Secretariat for the outstanding efforts made during the preparatory process for this session.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our lives and, in particular, the execution of the OPCW's fundamental activities have been no exception. For this reason, we commend the actions that have been taken in preparation for this Council to ensure the health and well-being of the participants, as well as the work of the Technical Secretariat, to continue meeting the responsibilities of this Organisation towards the effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to chemical disarmament and the work of the OPCW in order to achieve this important objective.

El Salvador welcomes the efforts of the States Parties together with the Technical Secretariat in developing a constructive dialogue on the approval of the OPCW's biennial draft budget for 2022–2023. My country hopes that we will be able to reach a comprehensive decision based on a common agreement on this aspect, without the end result causing any delays to the Organisation's fundamental activities. Regrettably, the Government of El Salvador does not find it possible to accept any increases in the annual contributions due to international organisations in light of the financial difficulties resulting from the impact of the pandemic, as well as from the need to use our limited resources for economic and social recuperation.



We find relevant the initiative tabled by Germany on establishing a mechanism for convening meetings or sessions of the Executive Council in special circumstances, bearing in mind the current situation in which it has been necessary to resort to viable alternatives and virtual means to continue our actions and activities in support of chemical disarmament and the peaceful use of chemicals.

We praise the dedication of the Secretariat for continuing to provide international assistance and cooperation, with the end result of strengthening national capacities even in the circumstances of the pandemic. The excellent support that has been provided by the body via virtual means on adequate management and best practices in the peaceful use of technology and chemistry have been of great importance to our National Authority.

In this regard, my delegation congratulates the Director-General on the start of the construction of the OPCW's new Centre for Chemistry and Technology, which will no doubt strengthen assistance to States Parties and make integral contributions to strengthen their capacities and use advances in science and technology as applicable to chemistry and towards achieving a world free of chemical weapons.

We recognise the work carried out by the Ambassadors of Australia and Uruguay as co-facilitators of the organisational governance group, especially in developing the tenure policy in order to add flexibility to the service period for staff members of the Technical Secretariat in special, fully justified circumstances, to ensure improved implementation of the Organisation's mandates.

Nevertheless, El Salvador shares the concerns of many GRULAC countries regarding the impact that the latest policy could have in terms of balanced geographical distribution and the scant representation held by the Latin American and Caribbean region within the staff of the Secretariat. For this reason, we find it advisable to continue with the most in-depth possible study and analysis of its implications in order to guarantee that the implementation will be pertinent, equitable, effective, and transparent for the smooth functioning of the OPCW.

El Salvador reiterates its commitment to the complete and irreversible destruction of chemical weapons and reaffirms its vehement condemnation of the use of these weapons against the civil population by anyone and under any circumstances. In this regard, we recognise the advances achieved in the investigations in the use of chemical weapons in Syria and we are confident that through collaborative cooperation amongst all of the actors involved and the OPCW, the necessary results will be achieved to clarify these unfortunate events.

As a member of the Council, my country is firmly committed to a search for dialogue and consensus in order to obtain favourable results from this session, thereby contributing to the achievement of the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention and strengthening the institution of the OPCW.

I kindly request that this statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Eighth Session of the Executive Council and published on the Organisation's website and external server.