

Statement by H.E Mr. Suljuk Mustansar Tarar
Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Pakistan to OPCW
99th Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
(08-11 March 2022, The Hague)

Madam Chair

We welcome you at the helm of the 99th Session of the Executive Council. We are confident that your extensive diplomatic experience will help us steer this session to a successful conclusion. You have my delegation's full support and cooperation in carrying out 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.

We commend the work being done by OPCW under Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias. We hope that in his second term the Director General would continue to work in a transparent and inclusive manner to fulfill the responsibilities of the position as enshrined in the Convention.

Madam Chair,

The single most important goal of the OPCW is the total verified destruction of chemical weapons from the world. We still await reaching that target. As we commemorate 25 years of CWC, 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.

The Twenty Fifth anniversary of CWC 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, this forum in the past always showed the way through its “consensus” based decision making. Lack of consensus, Madam Chair, as history and practice tells us, is not beneficial for global disarmament and would not yield anything except politicization and hollow grandstanding. Today we are at an important inflection point to think beyond politics and for the larger good of humanity. Regrettably, there is little reassurance. But my delegation is always working towards and we continue to remain hopeful that the traditional strength of the OPCW to progress through dialogue and consensus will be restored.

We are all aware of the differences in views of States Parties on change in the rules of procedure for the Advisory Board on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF) and Tenure Policy of the OPCW. We sincerely hope that due time and effort will be made to bridge the differences. Any exceptions in the tenure policy should be cautiously looked at and not lead to a hidden preferential system especially when the geographical representation in the organization remains a key concern.

Madam Chair,

We have reviewed the Director General’s reports on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. We understand that the pandemic affected Secretariat’s work in this area. It is crucial to continue a 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.

Madam Chair,

Pakistan has consistently worked for the national implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention objectives. Pakistan will continue to stress that the Convention is implemented in a 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.

We welcome DG Arias' Chemtech center initiative. We had made a contribution to it. Reportedly work on it is progressing but sadly not much information has been shared with all EC members. We wish to engage and discuss substantively on the center's functioning and hope to receive more information on the Chemtech center in a timely and inclusive manner. An inclusive, transparent and consultative process on Chemtech center will ensure its optimal usage and success.

Madam Chair,

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.
