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**BANGLADESH**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR M RIAZ HAMIDULLAH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
BANGLADESH TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me extend our cordial welcome to H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen on his assumption as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. My delegation is fully confident of his acumen and capabilities in steering the business of this session towards a successful conclusion.

Our felicitations to the newly elected members of the Executive Council Bureau and other officials as well. We affirm our support and cooperation to you, Mr Chairperson, and also the members of the Bureau in discharging your mandated responsibilities.

The Bangladesh delegation takes the opportunity to congratulate Director-General Fernando Arias on his re-appointment. Bangladesh commits our full support to the Director-General, in every possible way.

I must also register our appreciation to the Chairperson of the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, H.E. Ambassador José Antonio Zabalgoitia Trejo of Mexico, for his sincere efforts during the last session of the conference.

My delegation wishes to thank the Director-General for his informative and substantive report presented at this session of the conference. We appreciate the persistent efforts of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat for ensuring full and effective implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), even amidst the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bangladesh 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.



Indeed, global challenges, like the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change re-emphasise the urgency of comprehensive multilateral collaboration for tackling the situation. Developing economies, like Bangladesh look forward to unified approaches to confront such common challenges, especially by sharing scientific knowledge, technology, innovation, information and best practices.

Bangladesh, as an original signatory to the Convention, upholds the principle of ‘never again’; and would reiterate that chemical weapons should not be used by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances. The Article 25(a) of the Constitution of Bangladesh highlights its principle in favour of a complete disarmament. The foreign policy guidance of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman “friendship to all, malice to none” deeply encourages us to renew our commitment to achieve a world permanently free of chemical weapons and to contribute to international security and stability, complete disarmament and global economic development.

We acknowledge the progress made in the destruction of 98.35% of the declared stockpile of chemical weapons in the United States of America and the developments in the destruction of the abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) of Japan in China. We hope for the sustained attention to meet the goal of destructing the stockpiles and the ACWs well before the Convention enters into the post-destruction phase. As we head towards the post-destruction phase of 2023, we wish that the Organisation would continue guiding us in the volatile landscape of technologies and global security.

For a better future, Bangladesh would like the OPCW to be steadfast as the prime Organisation for the peaceful use of chemicals, chemical industry, enhancing chemical laboratory capabilities, chemical-knowledge promotion, advancing preparedness and exchange programmes and advanced research, etc., Bangladesh therefore values and fully supports the development of the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology. Bangladesh would urge the Technical Secretariat to launch innovative, education, capacity building and outreach programmes, cementing institutional collaboration, strengthening the network of the national authorities, laboratory upgradation and platform on regional best practise sharing.

We all recognise that every sphere of modern life and living is directly or indirectly influenced by the use of chemicals. As we strive to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the influence of peaceful use of chemicals in attaining SDGs, especially, SDG 12 (on sustainable consumption and production), SDG 3 (good health and well-being); SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation); SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy); SDG 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure); SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities); SDG 14 (life below water); and SDG 15 (life on land) could not go unnoticed. Effective and robust national coordination has to be matched by meaningful international and regional cooperation. Bangladesh would thus urge for robust international cooperation in ensuring the peaceful use of chemistry for the well-being of our people, indeed in the context of attaining SDGs.

Bangladesh continues to fulfil its obligations under Article VII of the Convention relating to national implementation measures. While we appreciate the active encouragement and support of the Technical Secretariat, the Technical Secretariat needs to assist the States Parties from the developing world to fully implement their national obligations and to deal with any threat of chemical terrorism through tailor-made capacity-building programmes. Its institutional experience and expertise could leverage mobilisation of the support of developed States Parties.

In this regard, we have been pursuing the Technical Secretariat to set up the modalities for funded junior professional officers (JPOs) and internship from the developing countries. Ensuring geographical diversity and gender balance in staffing is crucial for OPCW. This should eventually lead to the effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention and significantly contribute to international peace and security and technological and economic development of all the States Parties.

A culture of consensus and spirit of cooperation among the States Parties is crucial in our quest for non-proliferation and prevention of the use or re-emergence of chemical weapons. We would urge all actors to uphold all provisions of the Convention, under all circumstances.

Bangladesh applauds the Scientific Advisory Board for its significant work and contributions in advancing science and technology for peaceful use of chemistry. This is indeed a continuing process.

We appreciate the recommendations of Scientific Advisory Board on the central nervous system-acting chemicals (CNS-acting chemicals) for law enforcement purposes. While we concur that the CNS-acting chemicals must not be used for law enforcement purposes, we believe that the prohibition of aerosolised use of CNS-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes in no way should hinder the beneficial or developmental use of CNS-acting chemicals, for instance, in medical, pharmaceutical, or agricultural sectors. Our collective focus should rather be science and technology oriented peaceful use of chemicals. In that direction, all of us should strive to forge consensus on issues like the responsible use of CNS-acting chemicals.

On the OPCW Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2023, particularly at this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh would call for understanding and flexibility from all States Parties to adopt it on consensus.

Mr Chairperson as I conclude, let me underscore that the upcoming years are very crucial for both the Organisation and the States Parties. 2023—the next phase—is approaching, when we need intense collaboration and partnerships with all the relevant regional and international organisations as well as with the chemical industry associations, scientific community, academia, and NGOs, to raise our collective voice for the peaceful use of chemicals and endeavour for our shared goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

We look at OPCW to deepen engagements in education through outreach, research, and scientific collaborations, vis-à-vis industry. These are crucial for broader partnership for peace where the States Parties shoulder greater responsibilities. All the States Parties can ill afford to see the OPCW getting further divided; and must re-energise the principle of solidarity and consensus for a greater cause.

I would request that this statement be circulated as an official series document of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

I thank you.