



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Ninety-Ninth Session  
8 – 10 March 2022

EC-99/NAT.37  
8 March 2022  
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

**ARGENTINA**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE  
OPCW AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Esteemed colleagues,

Ambassador Ajayi, please allow me to first congratulate you on your appointment and wish you success in your work. Likewise, allow me to extend our gratitude to H.E. Mr Abdelouahab Bellouki, Ambassador of Morocco, for his work in leading this Council, and Ambassador Lingner for preparing for this session. I would also like to extend greetings to the Director-General and the staff of the Secretariat.

It has fallen on you to chair this Council at a dramatic time for the international community. I reiterate at this forum the call made by my country elsewhere: the war must stop, and peace and dialogue must prevail. We insist that the Russian Federation immediately cease the use of force, and we condemn the invasion of Ukraine and any military operations on its territory. True to its principle, Argentina rejects the use of armed forces and reiterates the need to de-escalate violence.

Bearing in mind what took place a few days ago with the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, we call to preserve the facilities where any chemicals may be found and recall once again that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, under any circumstances, is in contradiction to international law, and we reject its use.

We now move to focus on the agenda we have ahead; we would like to once again note the need to have the documents available in advance in all six official languages.

Along these same lines, I would like to bring attention to the fact that there are some major problems with the new Catalyst platform. In the weeks leading up to this session, there have been numerous occasions on which it was not possible to view documents due to problems with the platform. This makes it difficult, at the very least, for the delegations to adequately review documents and puts at risk the very development of the work of this Council.

In this regard, and with respect to subparagraph 7(g) on confidentiality, we would like to underscore that my country has not received the note mentioned in the report; it has been requested and a response will be received shortly. We do not rule out that other countries have also not received it, and this could explain the lack of responses reported by the Technical Secretariat.



With regard to agenda item 9, we welcome the appointment of Dr Graciela González as Vice-Chairperson of the SAB. We are confident in the importance of her participation in this group.

Along these same lines, we welcome the experts of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach, among the members of which are distinguished professionals from my country.

We have noted with concern the various reports of the Technical Secretariat on the progress made with the investigations and inspections in the Syrian Arab Republic. Once again, we support the investigators and their work, and we reiterate once again that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances is unacceptable and constitutes a flagrant violation of the international obligations stemming from the Convention and international law, and that those responsible for their use must be held accountable.

My country welcomes the establishment of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference, which is scheduled for May 2023, and commits itself to working constructively with the representative of my regional group, as well as with the other members, in order to identify guidelines for the years ahead. This is an important moment in the history of the Convention—a model of success in the field of disarmament—and we must reflect on how to maintain its effectiveness.

Finally, I would like to mention the need to continue the consultations on changes to the tenure policy and ensure that there are discussions on the underlying matters of interest to all members, such as the imbalance in the geographical distribution that exists to date and which primarily affects GRULAC countries. We believe that the tenure policy and the geographical representation in the composition of the Technical Secretariat are two things that cannot be addressed separately. As such, we believe that discussions on the tenure policy should be held in parallel with those aimed at rectifying the imbalance in geographical representation.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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