



INDIA
STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR PRADEEP KUMAR RAWAT
REPRESENTATIVE
AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES
29 NOVEMBER- 03 DECEMBER 2021

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates,

I extend warm felicitations to the Chairperson on assuming charge of the 26th Session of the Conference of the States Parties. I am confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will be successfully conducted. I express appreciation to Ambassador Jose Antonio Zabalgoitia Trejo, the outgoing CSP Chair, for successfully steering the 25th session of the Conference.

I thank the Director-General for his statement and appreciate the efforts made by the team towards implementing the provisions of the Convention. My delegation commends the efforts of the Technical Secretariat for ensuring effective functioning of the OPCW despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of NAM States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

India attaches high importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention which is a unique, non-discriminatory disarmament instrument and serves as a model for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. We take note of the progress in the destruction of stockpile of remaining chemical weapons and acknowledge the progress to achieve their complete destruction within the scheduled timeline.

India's position on any use of chemical weapons is unequivocal and consistent. India is firmly opposed to any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, and under any circumstances. Any allegations of use of chemical weapons must be dealt with strictly as per the provisions and procedures laid down in the Convention, and concerns must be addressed through consultation and cooperation among all parties concerned.

Whilst it is a matter of immense satisfaction that the Convention has 193 States Parties, we must also be cognizant of the fact that more efforts are required to achieve universality of the Convention. My delegation continues to appeal to the States that are still to join the Convention, to consider signing and ratifying the Convention as early as possible.

At the same time, universality is also critical to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons and its access by non-State actors. The discovery of new toxic chemicals and technological advancements that could enable development, production, deployment and dissemination of the chemical weapons calls for enhanced vigilance and greater collaboration by the member states.

We take note of the reports of the Director-General on Progress in the Elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme. We encourage cooperation between the Syrian Arab Republic and the OPCW to resolve all outstanding issues concerning Syria's declarations and relevant outstanding issues. We sincerely hope that the resumption of the high-level consultation, would help address all outstanding issues.

We have examined the draft decision on the Understanding Regarding the Aerosolised Use of Central Nervous System (CNS)-Acting Chemicals for Law Enforcement Purposes. We feel that further consultation and discussion on the matter could enable better understanding and reach consensus.

India welcomes and supports international cooperation activities under the OPCW, including capacity-building initiatives. In this regard, India has recently made a voluntary contribution to the OPCW Trust Fund for construction of the ChemTech Centre, which aims to further enhance capacity of Member States in the context of the CWC. Further, India stands ready to assist OPCW in its efforts to promote peaceful uses of chemical technology. India is organizing a virtual training programme on Analytical Skills Development from 6-10 December 2021. The course is being conducted for the third time by the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology,

a premier institute in this field and we are happy to know that several representatives of States Parties to the Convention are participating in the programme.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of this Conference and circulated as an official document of this session, and posted on the external server and the public website of the OPCW.

Thank you.
