



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Seventh Session
28 November – 1 December 2022

C-27/NAT.13
28 November 2022
ENGLISH only

INDIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR REENAT SANDHU
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Ambassadors and delegates,

India warmly welcomes H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela, Permanent Representative of South Africa as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties. We are confident that under his able leadership, the Conference will be smoothly conducted. The Indian delegation stands ready to extend its full support and cooperation for the successful conclusion of this session of the Conference of the States Parties.

We appreciate the commitment and work of the Technical Secretariat, led by Director-General Fernando Arias, towards effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”).

India attaches great importance to the Convention which is a unique, non-discriminatory and model disarmament instrument for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. We support all efforts to achieve universality of the Convention and urge the remaining States not Party to sign and ratify the Convention at the earliest.

India reiterates the importance of adhering to scheduled timelines for destruction of remaining stockpiles and hopes that the milestone of 100% destruction of declared stockpiles can be achieved as per the target in 2023.

India maintains its consistent and unequivocal condemnation of the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody and under any circumstances. Any use of chemical weapons is in complete disregard of humanity, reprehensible, and contrary to the provisions of the Convention. We believe that all investigations into the alleged use of chemical weapons should be impartial, credible and objective, and strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. The impartiality and integrity of OPCW must be preserved and maintained under all circumstances.

The discovery of new toxic chemicals, technological advancements in the deployment and dissemination of chemical weapons and threat posed by non-State actors are of serious concern. It is our firm belief that full and effective national implementation by States Parties will help to address these challenges and secure the global supply chains of chemicals. Additionally,



collaboration with the chemical industry can be critical in improving the chemical safety and security to ensure that toxic chemicals do not fall in the wrong hands. In this regard, we welcome the note by the Director-General on engaging the chemical industry associations and strengthening the cooperation with them.

In light of the emerging challenges and scientific advancements, India believes that the OPCW needs to develop more transparent, equitable, and objective criteria and modalities for inspections. We also need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the verification system and urge all States Parties to work together towards this goal.

India supports international cooperation and assistance activities under the OPCW, including capacity-building and promotion of peaceful uses of chemical technology under Article XI of the Convention. India has contributed to the enhancement of analytical and laboratory skills by training more than 100 experts from developing and least developed countries. In this year alone, three such training courses were conducted by the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology. India stands ready to assist the OPCW in its future capacity-building efforts including through the Centre for Chemistry and Technology.

We welcome the decision on “Manner of appointment of the External Auditor of the OPCW” which streamlines the selection criteria and the procedure of appointment. We hope that States Parties will continue to work in the same spirit of cooperation on important issue of organisational governance of the OPCW.

India appreciates the ongoing preparatory work for the Fifth Review Conference in 2023 under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Permanent Representative of Estonia. We stand ready to contribute towards a successful Fifth Review Conference in May 2023.

Finally, India would like to underline the importance of consensus and the need for all decisions to be taken by the States Parties in consultation with each other and a spirit of cooperation.

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

Thank you.

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