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PHILIPPINES

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOSE EDUARDO MALAYA III
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES TO
THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I wish to welcome H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela of South Africa as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are confident of his leadership in steering this session to a successful conclusion.

I also wish to extend my delegation's support and appreciation for Director-General Fernando Arias and the whole team of the Technical Secretariat for their dedication in ensuring the proper monitoring and implementation of the mandate and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Convention"), considering the current global challenges brought about by the pandemic and the rising inflation.

The Philippine President, in his statement at the United Nations General Assembly in September, underscored the importance of addressing the scourge of the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction. There is no excuse for death caused by the reckless use of chemical weapons that can cause mass destruction. The Philippines remains committed to the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the provisions of the Convention and supports efforts to eliminate chemical weapons stockpiles and the non-proliferation of chemical weapons.

In April this year, the Organisation marked the twenty-fifth anniversary year of the entry-into-force of the Convention. The Convention represents the international norm against the use of chemical weapons and remains the most successful disarmament treaty in the world. With 99% of the world's declared chemical weapons stockpiles already destroyed, the Philippines looks forward to the complete elimination of all declared chemical weapons as soon as possible.

We call on States Parties' sustained efforts and solidarity in ensuring the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and compliance with the Convention. We should transcend our differences and commit to upholding justice, respecting human rights, and maintaining international peace and security.



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ination of chemical weapons entails universal adherence to the Convention. In this regard, the Philippines appreciates the Technical Secretariat's efforts to achieve universality of the Convention and calls on the remaining States not Party to the Convention to accede to it.

The Philippines also calls on the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic to continue to work together in a constructive manner and without further delay to complete the latter's declarations, close its outstanding issues satisfactorily and with regard to relevant decisions by the Conference of the States Parties and provisions of the Convention, and finally close its dossier.

The Philippines is keen to pursue initiatives that can assist our country in strengthening its capabilities in countering chemical weapons threats. Our country attaches great importance in participating in more capacity-building activities that aim to enhance preparedness against chemical weapons. Furthermore, we would like to express our interest in having a Philippine laboratory to be accredited as an OPCW Laboratory. We are also interested in trainings that will upgrade the skills of our experts in chemical analysis, synthesis and reporting.

The expertise that the OPCW has generously shared with the Philippines and other States Parties ensures that, not only can we take prompt action and provide effective assistance during an actual incident of a chemical terrorist attack, but also build valuable capability to deter such acts. Exchanges such as these that are undertaken under the OPCW framework can enable our countries to have capacities at par with the rest of the world in managing the fast developments in the chemical industry.

Mr Chairperson, the Philippines commends the Technical Secretariat for the steady progress of the construction of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), notwithstanding the pandemic, global inflation and supply chain constraints. The Philippines looks forward to its completion by the end of this year and the commencement of the programmes and activities at the Centre in 2023. The Centre will further strengthen the Organisation's capability against new and emerging chemical weapons threats and support capacity building among OPCW Member States.

An equally important thrust of the Convention is the promotion of the peaceful uses of chemistry, and the forthcoming operation of the ChemTech Center will more fully enable the OPCW to realise this objective. The Philippines thus supports the OPCW's programmes, services, and projects that foster the exchange of information, equipment, and chemicals consistent with the peaceful uses of chemistry which are beneficial to all mankind. We note with appreciation the initiatives of the OPCW—with focus on strengthening economic and technological development—to bring together people from around the world to share knowledge and practices, learn about the Convention, build and foster relationships, support the development and uses of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, and ultimately strengthen the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The Philippines supports the initiative to convene Executive Council meetings or sessions in emergency situations to ensure business continuity in the work of the OPCW. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that, despite the challenges posed by situations that may limit how the usual work can be done, the Executive Council must continue to discharge its duties and responsibilities.

The Philippines appreciates the work of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference which will be held in May 2023 under the able leadership of H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia. The ongoing consultations provide a venue for an objective assessment of the past five years of the implementation of the Convention and a vision for the next five years. We are grateful for the consultative mechanism and inclusivity approach which allow regional groups to take part in the substantive discussions in preparation for the Conference.

Mr Chairperson, the Philippines does not possess, manufacture nor use chemical weapons, and condemns the use of this weapon by anyone, anywhere, anytime and for whatever reason, and calls on all other States Parties to also do so.

As a developing country, with a substantial number of its citizens working and residing in all corners of the world, the threat posed by chemical weapons is of great concern. Hence, we recognise the importance of global and regional cooperation to eliminate the threat and use of chemical weapons. This threat can be effectively addressed through collaborative efforts of all States under the framework of the OPCW.

Only when all States Parties remain firm in their commitment to prohibit chemical weapons in all its forms can the security of all be assured.

I request that this statement be made an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and posted in the OPCW website.

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