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IRAQ

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ TO THE
OPCW AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellency, the Director-General of the OPCW,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour and a privilege to represent my country's delegation at the 101st Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW. At the outset, I would like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Ziad Mohamed Al Atiyah of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the distinguished Vice-Chairpersons for presiding over the current session of the Council. I am confident that your outstanding diplomatic experience and sagacious steering will contribute to the success of the Council's proceedings and will have an effective impact in conducting fruitful discussions. I assure you of our delegation's support during this session to come out with positive decisions.

In addition, the delegation of Iraq extends thanks and appreciation to the Director-General, His Excellency Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his statement, as well as to all staff members of the technical units of the OPCW for their continuous support for my country through training our national staff and helping them fully fulfil Iraq's obligations towards the OPCW.

Our delegation supports the statement delivered by His Excellency Fikrat Akhundov, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China. Furthermore, Iraq appreciates the ongoing consultations within the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference scheduled to be held in May 2023. We stress the importance of this Working Group, and we encourage its full cooperation with all States Parties and regional groups with a view to achieving a consensual outcome at the Fifth Review Conference.

The OPCW has proven its efficiency as a tool for verifying the stringent security procedures for chemical weapons and related substances which still exist. Therefore, the Government of Iraq is in favour of any international effort that aims to prevent the use of these weapons by anyone. Thus, Iraq will continue to support all proposals for the inclusion of chemicals (that have non-peaceful uses) in the tables of prohibited chemicals in the Annex to the Convention, as we believe in the need to support any proposal that would achieve a world free of chemical weapons.



Against this background and in order to promote the role of the OPCW in performing its mandate in an optimal manner and in carrying out the desired tasks as and when necessary, my country's delegation supports the proposal made by Germany calling for allowing the Executive Council to hold meetings or sessions in emergency circumstances and urges all other States and regional groups to support it.

Iraq affirms its firm position that the OPCW should be distanced from any politicisation of its work and preserve its character as a purely technical organisation. Also, Iraq believes firmly that we all have a responsibility to implement the conventions and treaties on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, and stresses that we should all restore the principle of consensus within the Organisation and constructive cooperation to achieve its objectives.

In conclusion, I reaffirm the commitment and full eagerness of my country's Government to work for the success of the proceedings and activities of the Organisation in order to achieve our goal of ending the recurrent use of chemical weapons. Therefore, we reiterate our call for States that have not yet done so to join the Convention soonest and to subject their relevant facilities and sites to the control of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. In this vein, the Government of Iraq affirms the pivotal role of the OPCW in the full elimination of lethal chemical weapons, stressing that we endeavour to remove the difficulties and bring the views closer together in order to reach effective outcomes and decisions that help achieve our objective of ridding the world of chemical weapons once and for all and ease the concerns of the Member States of the OPCW.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of the 101st Session of the Executive Council and posted on the OPCW's public website and on Catalyst.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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