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**SAUDI ARABIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ZIAD BIN MAASHI AL ATIYAH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TO  
THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE  
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I am pleased to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela of South Africa on his election as Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. I am confident that your diplomatic experience and great wisdom will contribute to the success of this session. I take this opportunity to thank the Chairperson of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference, H.E. Bård Ivar Svendsen of Norway, for his able leadership of the Conference. I am also pleased to express our deep appreciation and thanks to the Director-General, H.E. Fernando Arias, to his aids at the Technical Secretariat, and to all staff members of the Organisation for their efforts in preparation for the Conference. Also, my country's delegation welcomes the statement delivered by the Delegation 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.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention on the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention which is the most successful disarmament convention in history. This success would not have been possible without the efforts made by the States Parties to the Convention through ensuring the implementation of the provisions and obligations contained in the Convention, effective participation in the work of the OPCW organs such as the Conference of the States Parties and the Executive Council, and permanent and effective cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. States Parties are convinced of the importance of prohibiting the production, development, acquisition, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons for the achievement of their common goals of ensuring international peace and security and protecting world peoples and resources against the consequences of chemical weapons use. I would also like to commend all the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat to achieve the goals of the Convention in line with its mandate under the Convention with proficiency, professionalism and transparency, thus contributing effectively to the success of the Convention.

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, my country's delegation looks forward to a successful outcome of the Fifth Review Conference, which will be held from 15 to 19 May 2023. My country's delegation believes in the opportunities offered by the Review Conference to review the operation of the Convention over the past period and



consider the achievements that can be made in the coming years with a view to ensuring the continuous success of the Convention as a unique disarmament convention and promoting its role in preserving international security and peace.

My country's delegation takes this opportunity to thank H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia, Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference, and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts in preparation for the Fifth Review Conference. My country's delegation supports all the efforts that would ensure the success of the Conference.

My country's delegation stresses that achieving the universality of the Convention is the only guarantee for the prohibition of the production and use of chemical weapons and the promotion of international peace and security. My country's delegation commends the efforts made by the OPCW to this end and urges States not party to the Convention to join it.

Convinced of the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention aimed at promoting international peace and security and ensuring the peaceful use of chemicals, my country attaches great importance to implementing its obligations under the Convention, in keeping with its consistent policy aimed at promoting cooperation in the prohibition and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including making the Middle East region free of all weapons of mass destruction. My country has also worked constructively with the States Parties to the Convention to support and implement the decisions that would help achieve the purposes of the Convention.

My country's delegation affirms that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances is deplorable and in complete contradiction with the provisions of the Convention and with the legal norms and standards of the international community.

Despite the progress made in the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, the discrepancies and inconsistencies in Syria's initial declaration and subsequent submissions are a source of concern for us. My country's delegation calls on the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation and its teams in order to implement all decisions relating to chemical weapons use in Syria. Also, it expresses its firm position condemning and deploring the use of chemical weapons by any party whatsoever and stresses the need to bring perpetrators to account.

The current session has before it numerous matters to decide upon. I would like to highlight my delegation's position on the following:

1. My country's delegation supports the draft decision on the draft revised Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2023 (C-27/DEC/CRP.4) and hopes that the draft decision will be adopted by consensus as much as possible. It calls on all States Parties to support the draft decision in order to help and allow the Organisation to perform its duties in the best manner possible.

In this regard, my country's delegation thanks the facilitator for the budget, Mr Frank Groom of Ireland, the co-facilitator, Mr Jerzy Gierasimiuk of Poland, and the Technical Secretariat for the efforts made in the preparation and discussion of the revised Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2023.

2. My country's delegation supports the draft decision entitled "Manner of Appointment of the External Auditor" (C-27/DEC/CRP.2) and calls on the States Parties to support it.

My country's delegation thanks H.E. Jorge Skinner-Klée Arenales of Guatemala, the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Manner of Appointment of the External Auditor, for his efforts in leading the Group, which have contributed to the preparation of the aforementioned draft decision and proposing the procedure and selection criteria for the appointment of the external auditor.

3. My country's delegation has reviewed with interest the draft decision entitled "Extension of the Special Fund for OPCW Special Missions" (C-27/DEC/CRP.1). In its preamble, the draft decision stated that the OPCW continued to incur additional costs since 2022 due to unexpected activities, such as fact-finding missions, and that these unexpected activities may occur in the coming years at a relatively short notice and outside the regular programme and budget cycle.

In this regard, my country's delegation reiterates its support for the efforts that help the Technical Secretariat meet the necessary costs to implement its obligations and duties in relation to the unexpected activities that may occur in the future. Therefore, my country's delegation supports the draft decision entitled "Extension of the Special Fund for OPCW Special Missions" and calls on the States Parties to support it.

4. My country's delegation affirms its support for all efforts that ensure that the Technical Secretariat implements its obligations and mandates under the Chemical Weapons Convention and decisions of the Conference of the States Parties and the Executive Council, including the importance for the Technical Secretariat to have experts and inspectors who contribute effectively to all activities and operational tasks of the OPCW.

Convinced of the importance for the OPCW to retain its expertise and to be provided with all that enables it to implement its obligations, my country's delegation affirms its support for the draft decision on the rehiring of inspectors (C-27/DEC/CRP.9) and calls on all States Parties to support it and to explore a mechanism to solve the problem of the shortage of specialised staff as part of the OPCW's applicable and approved recruitment policy.

In conclusion, Mr Chairperson, my country's delegation stresses the importance of unobstructed economic and technological development in chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, in accordance with Article XI thereof and the relevant decisions, such as the decision of the Conference of the States Parties C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011 on the agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI of the Convention, including the importance of national capacity building in this regard and the exchange of expertise and knowledge among stakeholders, including scientific and academic institutions, the chemical industries sector, etc. My country's delegation also urges all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to make every effort to promote the implementation of Article XI of the Convention in order to benefit from non-prohibited chemical activities for the interest of peoples and States and the promotion of global economic development.

In this regard, my country's delegation wishes to commend the efforts being made by the facilitator for Article XI of the Convention, Ms Fatima Hamdia Tanweer of Pakistan, including the holding of a workshop dedicated to this Article on 14 October 2022.

My country's delegation looks forward to the inauguration on 12 May 2023 of the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology. This Centre, which is established in implementation of Article XI of the Convention, constitutes a turning point in the journey of the OPCW and will be a key bridge for the achievement of aspirations, especially in the transfer of technology and technical assistance to States Parties, and a beacon for science and knowledge in the domain of chemistry.

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

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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