

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AT THE 102nd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6(f)

Mr Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. The Islamic Republic of Iran as the main victim of chemical weapons in the contemporary era has always supported the mandate of the Organisation to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention.

My delegation has time and again expressed its serious concerns that in recent years, a few non-consensual decisions, including the decision “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018) and the decision “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic” (C-25/DEC.9, dated 21 April 2021) are overruling the Chemical Weapons Convention, leading to more polarisation and politicisation of this august body. Undoubtedly, the lack of consensus and common understanding among States Parties on critical and cross-cutting issues precludes the Organisation from achieving the noble goal of the Convention: a world free of chemical weapons, which is its *raison d’être*.

Mr Chairperson,

Apart from having strong position regarding IIT, my delegation is firmly convinced that the way and quality, in which the so-called Syrian dossier is being handled, would have a long-lasting effect on the Organisation's future work, its credibility among States Parties and professionalism of the Technical Secretariat. In light of this, the third report of this team is currently being reviewed by my colleagues in capital, and we will share our comments and observations in due course. While we reviewed the report quickly, several parts of the report weren't factually consistent and logically convincing to us. There are still many gaps, ambiguities, and questions remaining that need to be addressed properly. Some of these issues have already been brought to the attention of States Parties in the Technical Secretariat's briefings on 2 February and 8 March 2023.

The third report of the IIT, released on 27 January 2023 relied heavily on the reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), which itself was based on invalidated and unreliable open sources and interviews. Hence, the so-called findings of the IIT report were not a great surprise. But yet the repeated practice to rely on unfounded or dubious sources raises concerns.

My delegation while emphasize that the activities of the Fact Finding Mission in Syria should be of technical nature, depoliticized, based on validated information and reliable sources, and carried out on the basis of impartiality and professionalism, did not recognise the IIT and its attribution-related task, and was not oblivious of the fact that its report would be devoid of impartiality, and contain non-professional and judiciary-like allegations based on inauthentic data and open sources. The Islamic Republic of Iran Once again reiterates that giving the responsibility of “attribution” to the Secretariat to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons is beyond the Convention.

I request that this statement be posted as an official document of this session on the OPCW catalyst and public website.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.