



STATEMENT BY INDIA
AT THE 102nd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
14-17 March, 2023

Mr. Chairman,
Director General
Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates,

Indian delegation applauds the leadership of His Excellency Ziad Al Atiyah, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia as the Chair of the Executive Council. We are confident that the Chair will steer the 102nd session of the Council to its successful conclusion and assure our full cooperation and support of in his efforts.

We also appreciate the work of the Technical Secretariat, led by Director-General Fernando Arias, towards implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

My delegation associates itself with the written statement submitted by NAM States Parties to this Council.

India attaches great importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention, which embodies the global norm against the use of chemical weapons, and stands for its full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation. The universal adherence to the Convention is critical to achieving a comprehensive and verifiable disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons. We urge the remaining States that are not Parties to the Convention to consider acceding to the Convention at the earliest.

We take note of the reports of the Director-General on progress in the destruction of remaining declared chemical weapons stockpiles. It is important that the process of destruction is completed as per the scheduled timeline to ensure complete elimination of chemical weapons.

We note the reports of the Director-General on the progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, as well as the monthly reports on the activities related to the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and their production facilities submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic during the intersessional period. We urge continued and effective engagement between the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic and hope that all issues will be resolved through dialogue and cooperation.

India would like to reiterate its principled position that investigations of alleged use of chemical weapons must be conducted in strict compliance of the provisions and procedures laid down in the Convention, and concerns must be addressed through consultation and cooperation among all parties concerned. India remains committed to working together with States Parties to the Convention in ensuring its effective implementation.

India has always emphasized the importance of consensus and the need for all decisions to be taken by the States Parties in consultation with each other. My delegation considers that decisions which have far-reaching implications should be thoroughly discussed to achieve consensus amongst States Parties. We urge States Parties to continue to discuss and work together on the proposal to amend the Rules of Procedure of the OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters. A collective and consensual approach would be the best way forward on this matter.

India supports full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention, including the economic and technological development of the States Parties and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the convention.

India has collaborated with the Technical Secretariat for conducting Analytical Skills Development Course to enhance skills in the analysis of chemicals relevant to the Convention and to share knowledge on laboratory best practices. Now in its sixth year of implementation, the programme has trained more than 100 experts from 60 States Parties mainly from Asia, Africa and GRULAC regions. India stands ready to assist OPCW in its future capacity building efforts. We also look forward to the inauguration of the ChemTech Centre on 12 May, 2023 and hope that it will further scale up international cooperation and assistance programmes and foster scientific collaboration and research in the field of chemistry through academic and technical partnerships.

We commend the leadership of H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Permanent Representative of Estonia for chairing the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparations to the Fifth Review Conference. We appreciate the consultative manner of discussions and hope that the process will continue to be based on constructive engagement, unity of purpose, and shared commitment to advance balanced implementation of the Convention by the States Parties. India has contributed a working paper on the theme of adaption of the current verification regime to emerging challenges and will continue to actively work together with all States Parties for success of the Fifth Review Conference in May 2023.
