

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the OPCW
at the 102nd Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
(14-17 March 2023)**

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me begin by extending our gratitude to you, Ambassador Zaid Al. Atiyah, as the Chair of the Executive Council on your successful and sagacious leadership of the EC sessions. Please be assured of my delegation's continued cooperation.

We also thank DG OPCW Ambassador Fernando Arias for his leadership and vision to take forward the organization making it fit for purpose.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Azerbaijan on behalf of the States Parties belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

We marked 25 years of entry into force of CWC last year and are now looking towards the Fifth Review Conference. The Review Conference is an important inflection point. We would discuss our joint achievements and limitations but also need to discuss the future direction of the organization. We look back at an organization where spirit of consensus was at the heart of decision-making and progress. We abandon that spirit and we may have a divided organization. But with the CWC as our unifying force, Mr. Chair, we still have the opportunity to be able to break this cycle.

The convention makes us all converge to condemn use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone, and uphold all the articles of CWC without discrimination or prejudice. Thus, there is much in common to build on. My delegation has shared its national paper for the Review Conference and would endeavor to achieve a consensus document.

Consensus is at the heart of international arms control and disarmament negotiations. We have deviated from this tradition. Just because possibility of voting exists, it does not mean that we adopt it as a way of our working. Regrettably, we have come to a point where procedural issues like budget and DG's report are voted upon.

My delegation wishes to underscore our continued commitment to ensure that we revert to our tradition of consensus.

Mr. Chairperson,

The last state party joined CWC in 2018. We still are 4 members short of reaching universal ratification and hope to reach universality soon.

We welcome the information that the United States has destroyed more than 99% of all chemical weapons declared since the entry into force of the Convention.

We also take note of the destruction of Abandoned Chemical Weapons and welcome that the trilateral consultation between Japan, China and the OPCW technical Secretariat have resulted in planned resumption of on-site activities in 2023.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have reviewed reports on Syria, including progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme.

We commend the ongoing cooperation between the TS and the Syrian authorities and have noted the report by the Limited in Country Activities (LICA) visit by the Declaration Assessment team (DAT). It is our belief that only through cooperation, continued engagement, and consultation can all outstanding issues be resolved.

Mr. Chairperson,

Pakistan remains committed to CWC and the goal of international cooperation and assistance as per Article XI. It is our hope that the provisions of the convention are *“implemented in a manner which avoids hampering the economic or technological development of states parties.”* It, therefore, does not augur well that the budgetary allocation for ICA has been transferred in 2021. The TS should ensure necessary budgetary and personnel allocation for Article XI.

We will be inaugurating the new Center for Chemistry and Technology. We profusely congratulate the Director General and his team. It is indeed a legacy milestone. We hope that it will enhance the capacity of the TS to impart various capacity building programmes, serve as a knowledge hub, and exchange and dissemination of expertise and skills.

Mr. Chairperson,

In this session we hope to reach a conclusion on decision entitled *“Allowing the Convening of Executive Council Meetings or Sessions in Extraordinary Circumstances.”*

I want to emphasize here that extraordinary should not be made ordinary and arbitrary deadlines to conclude on areas requiring more consultations only lead to decisions that may create more confusion in future than play a unifying act.

Mr. Chairperson,

We look forward to discuss in more detail the tenure policy during the Review Conference. We hope it would not change the non-career nature of the organization and due regard would be given to equitable geographical representation.

Mr. Chairperson,

We express appreciation for Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) for the preparation of the Fifth Review Conference, for his efforts and we assure him of our continued support.

I request that our full statement posted on Catalyst and public website

I thank you Chair.
