

**Agenda item eight – General Debate**

**MALAYSIA**

**STATEMENT BY DR MOHD NORHISYAM MOHD YUSOF,  
REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA  
AT THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF  
THE STATES PARTIES (CSP-28)**

**27 NOVEMBER – 1 DECEMBER 2023**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates,

1. Let me begin by congratulating His Excellency Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the OPCW, on his election as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. We are confident that His Excellency Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar will steer a constructive deliberation of the Conference. On the same note, my delegation wishes to thank Mr Chairperson's predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela of South Africa, for his able stewardship of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference.
2. Our appreciation also goes to the Director-General, His Excellency Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his comprehensive report, and to the Technical Secretariat for their valuable contribution and support to the Conference.
3. Malaysia aligns itself with the statement delivered by His Excellency Ambassador Gaya Mammadov of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Members of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (NAM CWC) and China.

Mr Chairperson,

4. When States Parties gathered here in May this year for the Fifth Review Conference, we found ourselves in an unfortunate situation with no consensus-

based outcome document at the end of the Review Conference. Despite this unfortunate outcome, Malaysia was encouraged by the efforts undertaken by States Parties to engage across differing views, which resulted in a broad consensus on issues such as industry verification, universality, international cooperation and assistance, and organisational governance.

5. Since then, there has been substantial progress in discussion on these issues, notably through the Open-Ended Working Group on Geographical Representation led by His Excellency Ambassador Jaime Moscoso of Chile, and the Tenure Policy facilitation jointly led by Her Excellency Ambassador Susannah Gordon of New Zealand and Her Excellency Ambassador Elizabeth Ward Neiman of Panama.
6. Malaysia views these discussions, which were conducted with the aim of reaching a consensus among State Parties, as the best decision-making approach for this august Organisation. We hope that continued efforts to reach a consensus among States Parties will take place at this Twenty-Eighth Session.
7. Further, it is crucial that we persistently adapt our organization to address emerging challenges, including the threat of chemical terrorism, and, given the potential misuse of AI, to be vigilant in anticipating the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

Mr Chairperson,

8. The OPCW is indeed an august Organisation. 10 years ago, this Organisation was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons. In July this year, the OPCW continued to prove its unyielding commitment to its goal when it announced the complete destruction of all declared stockpiles under the Chemical Weapons Convention. While we note that destruction works for old and abandoned chemical weapons are underway, Malaysia trusts that the OPCW will continue to uphold the mandate given by States Parties in eliminating all forms of chemical weapons, through the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention.

9. 2023 also marks the 10-year anniversary of Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Despite many setbacks, Malaysia views the resumption of full rounds of consultations between the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Syrian National Authority earlier this month as a positive and necessary step in verifying the full implementation of all declaration-related obligations by the Syrian Arab Republic. The resumption further allows the DAT to fulfill its mandate in verifying the completeness and accuracy of the declaration. Recognising the importance of an accurate and complete declaration in accordance with the Convention, Malaysia urged for continued cooperation among all parties involved, to address the identified gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies that remain unresolved.

Mr Chairperson,

10. Malaysia reaffirmed our commitment to support and strengthen the OPCW, aligned with the objective of the Convention. Toward this end, Malaysia has been working closely with the Secretariat to enhance international cooperation and assistance among States Parties, particularly in areas such as peaceful use of chemistry and chemical response preparedness. Among others, Malaysia hosted the *Forum on Peaceful Uses of Chemistry* in May this year to raise awareness and understanding of chemical safety and security management, with a particular focus on building a culture of chemical safety and security among States Parties. In September 2023, Malaysia participated in the *OPCW Associate Programme*. Malaysia further hosted the *Emergency Response for First Responder Course* for the 11<sup>th</sup> year, to strengthen and enhance national, and subsequently regional capacities, to respond to emergencies involving the use of chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals in OPCW Member States in Asia.

11. In the coming month, Malaysia will host a workshop on *Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Response related to the implementation of the OPCW Online Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT)*. The OSAT is crucial to the development and implementation of improvement measures aimed at establishing and strengthening the National Protective Programmes (NPP) of the State Parties.

12. Malaysia firmly believes in collaboration and engagement with key stakeholders to drive meaningful progress within the Chemical Weapons Convention. Our conviction lies in the belief that by fostering dialogue and involving relevant stakeholders, we can garner invaluable insights crucial to advancing the cause of disarmament. Today, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire OPCW team for their unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in striving towards a world free of chemical weapons. It is through collective commitment and cooperation that we can truly make strides in building a safer and more secure future for all.

13. Looking into the future, Malaysia reiterates our commitment to contribute to the expansion of the OPCW-designated laboratory network through the OPCW Laboratory Twinning Initiative and cooperation with Australia. Furthermore, we remain seized that the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) will enhance the OPCW's laboratory capabilities; inspectors' routine and non-routine readiness and training; international cooperation and assistance programmes; and knowledge management and scientific collaboration between States Parties and the OPCW.

Mr Chairperson,

14. My delegation reiterates our principled position that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon, anywhere by anyone under any circumstances is reprehensible and contrary to the Convention, the United Nations resolutions, international legal norms and must be condemned.

15. Malaysia asserts that, in upholding the values of competence, efficiency, and integrity as outlined in the Convention, equitable geographical representation, gender equality, and the incorporation of a gender perspective must endure as integral aspects of the OPCW's initiatives and the execution of the CWC.

16. On that note, the proposed amendment to the OPCW Tenure Policy is timely, considering provisions such as the necessity for geographic representation and gender balance, support for additional measures to enhance knowledge

management, and the requirement for a review period to ensure that the intended objectives of the amendment continue to be met in the years to come.

17. Malaysia would also like to take the opportunity to commend the renewed commitment by South Sudan to work towards accession to the Convention, following the meeting between Director-General Fernando Arias and The Honourable James Pitia Morgan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of South Sudan in October 2023.

18. We urge others who remain outside the Convention to do so without delay, as a show of commitment to the global disarmament agenda.

I request this statement be circulated as an official document and posted on the OPCW website and external server.

Thank you.