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سفارة الجزائر بلاهاي

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Salima Abdelhak
Permanent Representative of
the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
to the OPCW**

**105th session of the Executive Council of
the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
March 05, 2024**

Mr Chairperson,

Mr Director-General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Let me reiterate my congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Lucian Fătu, Permanent Representative of Romania to the OPCW, for his chairmanship of our EC session. We are confident he will steer our deliberations to successful outcomes.

I wish also to express my gratitude to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his reports and his exhaustive statement and through him to commend the staff of the Technical Secretariat for its dedication in exercising its duties.

The Algerian delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the Member States of the NAM that are States Parties to the Convention and China, and with the statement of H.E. Ambassador Francis Danti Kotia, the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the OPCW, on behalf of the Africa Group.

My delegation would like to add some points on its national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our session takes place in an international context overshadowed by many conflicts which compromise the international peace and security with a real risk of the reemergence of chemical weapons as well as their use by non-state actors.

We are deeply concerned about the ongoing tragedy in Palestine not only because of the devastating human casualties and the flagrant breach of international law on a massive scale but also because Israel, the occupying power is not party to CWC and not bound by its provisions. We therefore have the very right to be concerned about the risk it may use chemical weapons or toxic chemical products in its war against the Palestinians.

While recalling Palestine's request for OPCW assistance in investigating this matter, we welcome, support and look forward to the outcomes of the TS efforts in monitoring the situation in Gaza and in keeping contact with the different parties, as stated by the Director General in his report.

This situation reminds us the imperative for our Organization to pursue universality, as a priority to ensure all states are unequivocally committed to the provisions of the CW Convention and to international peace and security.

Mr Chairperson,

Another significant concern deserving our full attention is chemical terrorism particularly through the potential use of chemical weapons by non-state actors, especially in zones of tension where they might be involved. The risks are aggravated by the rapid progress in science and technology, including artificial intelligence, which carries substantial potential to shape the development, deployment, and use of chemical weapons as highlighted in various disarmament fora, and stated by the OPCW Director General.

Our Organization needs therefore to continue engaging in cooperation with States parties and fostering partnership among them in order to collectively tackle this threat. We can rely in this endeavor on the strategic orientations outlined by the 5th Review Conference on these matters, on the work of the Open Ended Working Group on Terrorism and on the implementation of Article X to support the prevention and the response measures to potential chemical terrorism.

In this regard, we would like to applaud the table-top exercise on chemical terrorism, organized last November under the OTWG on Terrorism, providing a platform of discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences on how to strengthen plans and strategies to face these threats.

We also support OPCW's efforts, in collaboration with States Parties, to enhance preparedness and capabilities to respond to threats, particularly through activities related to Article X on assistance and protection. Chemex Africa 2023, held in Algeria under the Africa program, exemplifies this commitment, providing high-quality training to strengthen African first responders capabilities to respond to chemical emergencies. We commend OPCW's decision to organize the second edition of "Chemex Africa" in 2025 and to extend it to the GRULAC region. Algeria stands ready to share insights of the first edition.

Mr Chairperson,

We recommend the same attention be given to the implementation of article 11 in order to ensure the peaceful use of chemistry for development through inter alia, encouraging exchange of scientific and technical information, as well as chemicals and equipment for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. We are of the view that the annual review and evaluation workshop for the full implementation of Article XI constitutes a proper fora to discuss and develop concrete and appropriate actions for this purpose. We firmly believe that the Chem Tech Center has a significant role to play in advancing these objectives.

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation would like to welcome the progress highlighted in the DG's Report regarding the cooperation and the collaboration between the Republic of Syria and the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the resumption of dialogue through the 25th and 26th round of consultation held between the Declaration Assessment Team and the Syrian National Authority. We look forward positive outcomes.

Furthermore, my delegation welcomes the Technical Secretariat Note on both a strategic framework and an implementation program for the action plan on geographical representation. We look forward to its regular follow up and outcomes aiming to promote a diverse and highly skilled staff within the OPCW. Such a workforce will empower the Technical Secretariat to optimally carry out its responsibilities.

Finally, I would like to request the statement of Algeria be circulated as an official document of this session and be published on the OPCW's external and public website.

I thank you for your kind attention