



STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA
ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(THE HAGUE, 09-12 JULY 2024)

Chairperson,

Director-General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to join the estimated Permanent Representatives and delegates who have spoken before me in commending the work of the outgoing EC Chair, H.E. Mr. Lucian Fătu, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania to the OPCW, and **welcome H.E. Mr Andres Horacio Teran Parral, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the OPCW as Chairperson of the One Hundred and Sixth** Session of the Executive Council. The delegation of Rwanda has the utmost confidence in your ability to effectively lead us in all our deliberations towards a successful conclusion.

I wish to also extend our appreciation to the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias, for his statement and commend the DG and the Technical Secretariat for their demonstrated commitment to the strengthening of the work of the Organisation in facilitating the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The delegation of Rwanda fully associates itself with the statement of the Africa Group delivered by H.E. Mr. Francis D. Kotia, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana to the OPCW and at this juncture, allow me to make a brief statement in my national capacity.

Chairperson,

The delegation of Rwanda appreciates the efforts of the Technical Secretariat in strengthening existing capacity building programs for African State Parties. We therefore commend the progress made since the launch of the Sixth Phase of the Africa Programme and acknowledge the utility of such programmes in helping State Parties develop the necessary capacities that are instrumental in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We appreciate the support from States Parties and partners who have made voluntary contributions to the Africa Programme and we encourage the Technical Secretariat to consider the full funding of this programme under the regular budget in order to guarantee its sustainability.

Rwanda also commends the continued effort of the Technical Secretariat in initiating tailor-made programmes, which include the building and strengthening the capacities of chemical laboratories and centres of excellence in Africa. We take this opportunity to **congratulate** Algeria on the success of the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie in joining the OPCW-designated laboratories network.

We encourage the establishment of more designated laboratories on the continent and call on the continued support of the Technical Secretariat and other stakeholders to achieve this noble goal, which is crucial in enhancing States Parties capabilities to implement the CWC and equip them with the necessary tools to effectively respond to the use of Chemical Weapons and other chemical emergencies.

Mr. Chairperson,

Rwanda re-affirms its commitment to the principles of the convention against the use of chemical weapons. We note the ongoing exchanges between the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic and encourage both parties to maintain constructive dialogue and cooperation leading to concrete actions aimed at resolving all outstanding issues.

We welcome the convening of the 27th round of consultations between the Declaration Assessment Team and the National Authority of the Syrian Arab Republic in May 2024 and look forward to further progress on the Syrian dossier.

The increase of armed conflicts in various theatres across the globe has significantly raised the risk of use of chemical weapons by non-state actors for acts of terrorism. In this regard, Rwanda shares the view that high level coordination and exchange of information between all relevant stakeholders is crucial in building awareness on chemical security and advancing global efforts to prevent chemical terrorism as well as the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

Rwanda therefore commends the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T) chaired by H.E.Mr. Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa. We look forward to more fruitful exchanges and initiatives aimed at raising awareness on chemical security and supporting State Parties readiness to face these emerging threats.

Furthermore, Rwanda recognises the potential risk posed by artificial intelligence with regards to the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. We believe that a comprehensive approach between international organizations, State Parties and other relevant stakeholders is necessary in order to increase the preparedness to all eventualities.

In this regard, we congratulate the Kingdom of Morocco and the Technical Secretariat for organising a Global conference on the role of Artificial Intelligence in advancing the implementation of the CWC, scheduled on 22nd – 24th October 2024, in Rabat. We look forward to the discussions and outcomes that will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities for solutions to these emerging threats as well as the

potential opportunities for leveraging these new technologies for the benefit of the convention and the peaceful use of chemistry.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to conclude by re-affirming Rwanda's belief in the merits of consensus based decision making. We call on all the State Parties to prioritise this principle in order to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention

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

I thank you for your kind attention.