

STATEMENT by. H.E Ambassador Dr. Álvaro González Otero, Permanent Representative of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay to the OPCW at the THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES, during GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. President, Mr. Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

First of all, we congratulate our esteemed colleague, the Ambassador of the Republic of El Salvador, Mr. Agustín Vázquez Gómez, member of GRULAC, on his election as President of this 30th Conference of the States Parties. You may count on Uruguay's full support for the success of your work.

We thank the distinguished Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Almir Šahović, for his leadership and dedicated work during the past year.

I would also like to recognize, congratulate, and express our gratitude for the outstanding work of Ambassador Fernando Arias, who has served as Director-General since 2017 at the head of the Technical Secretariat. His commitment to the principles of impartiality, technical rigor, and institutional strengthening has been fundamental for the OPCW. We extend our best wishes to him in this final stage before his retirement next year.

We also congratulate all the candidates who participated in the election process for the position of the next Director-General, taking part in a historic, complex, and difficult election, and we deeply value their commitment to the objectives and principles of the OPCW. In particular, we congratulate the elected candidate, Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter, to whom we wish success in her functions, assuring her of Uruguay's collaboration and support.

Mr. President, Uruguay reaffirms once again its full commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention, to disarmament, non-proliferation, and the promotion of international peace, based on the fundamental defense and protection of human rights. We categorically condemn the use of chemical weapons, anywhere, under any circumstances, and by any actor, as a grave violation of international law, humanitarian law, and the Convention.

We welcome the historic opportunity to advance in the Disarmament Mission in Syria, and we recognize the importance of its continuation, within the framework of compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention and the mandates emanating from the OPCW's policy-making organs. We support the strengthening of efforts aimed at ensuring collective security, reducing the risks of proliferation to non-state actors, and guaranteeing that those responsible for chemical weapons attacks are held accountable before the international community. In this regard, we consider it relevant that the costs associated with such operations be managed with the greatest possible efficiency, ensuring a balance between the effective implementation of the OPCW's mandates and the contributory capacity of all its Members.

Notwithstanding the progress in Syria, we cannot ignore that challenges persist. We express our concern regarding reports of the possible use of chemical agents in the conflict in Ukraine. We insist on the need for rigorous, objective, and transparent investigations, and for accountability of those responsible, in accordance with international law.

Likewise, Uruguay observes with concern the humanitarian situation in Sudan, and reaffirms the need to prevent any risk of diversion or misuse of hazardous substances in the context of that conflict.

Mr. President, our country celebrates the holding of the regional exercise CHEMEX 2026, for the first time in Latin America. This exercise strengthens regional capacities in the field of assistance and protection, and reflects our region's commitment to the principles of the Convention.

We also highlight the growing importance of addressing the impact of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the use of drones, on the chemical disarmament regime. We support the work of the committee of experts established to assess the opportunities and risks these technologies represent for the verification and control system.

Uruguay further underscores the importance of continuing to strengthen national capacities, including the training of experts, the promotion of technical cooperation among specialized institutions, as well as the incorporation of new analytical centres from the Latin American region into the network of OPCW-accredited entities.

Mr. President, Uruguay insists on the need to preserve the technical, independent, and apolitical character of the OPCW. Only an Organization focused on science and cooperation will be able to continue fulfilling its mandate effectively for the benefit of all States Parties.

We also reaffirm the importance of achieving equitable geographical and gender representation within the Technical Secretariat, as part of the institutional strengthening of the OPCW.

Finally, Uruguay renews its unwavering commitment to the total prohibition of chemical weapons, to multilateralism based on respect for international law, and to the strengthening of collective mechanisms for peace and security.

We request that this national statement be considered as an official document of the 30th Conference of the States Parties and published in Catalyst, as well as on the Organization's website.