

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF AFRICAN STATES PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION DELIVERED BY THE COORDINATOR OF THE GROUP H.E. MS. MADELEINE LIGUEMOH ONDOUA, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON TO THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW), ON THE OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**(THE HAGUE, 10- 13 March 2026)**

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**Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States Parties (“The Africa Group/ the Group”) to the Chemical Weapons Convention (“The Convention”). The Group reiterates its full support to *H.E. Mr Thomas Schieb, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Federal Republic of Germany to the OPCW, as Chairperson of this **One Hundred and Eleventh** Session of the Executive Council* in steering the deliberations of this session to a successful conclusion.
2. The Group also extends its appreciation to the Director General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr. Fernando Arias and the entire staff of the Technical Secretariat for their efforts to further strengthen the work of the Organisation.
3. The Group associates itself with the statement of the Members of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the CWC and China, delivered by H.E. Ms. Mirjam Blaak Sow, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the OPCW.

4. The Group commends the launch of the 7<sup>th</sup> phase of the OPCW Africa Programme in January 2026 and appreciates the milestones achieved under the 6<sup>th</sup> phase and look forward to more tangible results under this new phase.
5. The Group recalls the tenure of the 23rd Annual meeting of the African National Authorities held in Tunis from 17 to 19 June 2025, which provided an opportunity to review the status of implementation of the convention in Africa, evaluate the progress achieved in various capacity building activities conducted under the 6<sup>th</sup> phase of the Africa Programme and to discuss and validate the objectives of the 7<sup>th</sup> phase.
6. The Group takes note of the recent positive developments regarding the Syrian chemical weapons dossier and welcomes the constructive cooperation and engagement demonstrated by the Syrian Arab Republic Government with the Technical Secretariat. These constructive developments will set the stage towards a definitive closure of the Syrian chemical weapons dossier and achieving the convention's core objectives. In this regard the group welcomes the last decision dated C-30/DEC.8 (dated 28/11/25) adopted during the thirtieth session of the Conference of State Parties concerning the reinstatement of the rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic.
7. The Group commends the ongoing cooperation between China and Japan under the supervision of the Technical Secretariat and encourages both parties to continue working towards achieving the full destruction of the Abandoned Chemical Weapons by Japan in China. The Group looks forward to the full implementation of the Action Plan agreed upon at the EC 101 to ensure that the deadline of 2027 is met.
8. The Group reaffirms its position against the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances and reiterates its commitment to the full

implementation of the CWC. We encourage the Technical Secretariat and the international community to continue the efforts towards achieving the full universality of the Convention and we call on States not yet party to the Convention to accede to it without delay and or preconditions.

9. The Group notes the continued effort of the Technical Secretariat in initiating tailor-made programmes- focusing on the needs and aspirations of States Parties, including enhancing capacities of chemical laboratories and centres of excellence in Africa. The Group eagerly looks forward to more designated laboratories in Africa with adequate capacities to retain designated status.
10. The Group therefore welcomes the course co-organised at the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology (NICC- GN) from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025 in Algiers. The group looks forward to the regular conduct of all kinds of capacity building activities that can enhance the capabilities of African laboratories and support them in the process towards OPCW designation and embed them in the regular plan of activities of the Technical Secretariat.

Mr. Chairperson,

11. The Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T) chaired by H.E. Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa to the OPCW continues to be the primary forum for Member States to address the evolving threat of chemical terrorism, particularly the risk of non-state actors acquiring or using chemical weapons. The 2025 Working Group discussions highlighted the persistent threat of chemical weapons use by terrorist groups driven by advances in emerging technologies particularly Artificial Intelligence. The threat of chemical weapons use by terrorist groups remains a serious concern, requiring enhanced detection and strengthening of global responses.
12. The Group welcomes the ongoing initiatives to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Building on the outcomes and the lessons learnt from CHEMEX AFRICA I, held in Algiers, the Group eagerly anticipates the

organization of CHEMEX AFRICA II and CHEMEX GRULAC. The Group wishes to thank all States Parties that continue to support activities aiming to reinforce the capability of State Parties in countering chemical terrorism.

13. The Group attaches great importance to Emerging Technologies and considers them opportune for the OPCW to elaborate a comprehensive strategy on the various applications of these technologies, in particular Artificial Intelligence. Building upon the outcomes and recommendations from the first Global Conference on the role of AI in advancing the implementation of the CWC, held in Rabat in October 2024, the Group is of the view that the outcomes of the deliberations in Rabat should dovetail with existing international cooperation and assistance programmes of the OPCW including the capacities of member states of the CWC, particularly developing countries.
14. The Group further calls for the continuation of discussions within the Organization, notably through enhanced interactions between States Parties and relevant subsidiary bodies such as the Scientific Advisory Board, given the strategic importance of this issue for the future of the Continent, particularly its potential to accelerate the implementation of the Convention in Africa.
15. The Group appreciates the Director-General's efforts to improve equitable geographical representation and gender balance at all levels of the Technical Secretariat. In this regard, the Group notes the recent advertisement in the Technical Secretariat and urges the Director General to seize the opportunity to address the existing imbalances by filling these vacancies with suitably qualified candidates from under represented regions.
16. The Group welcomes the decision taken at the CSP 28 on Tenure Policy, with the condition that any extension of contracts should not be effected if suitably qualified candidates from underrepresented regions are available or if the extensions do not affect the efforts to achieve better balance in the distribution of positions among different regions.
17. Furthermore, the Group wishes to encourage the implementation of knowledge management processes and knowledge sharing to afford the Organization the

broad benefits of a diverse and skilled workforce, consistent with Article VIII, Paragraph 44 of the Convention.

18. The Group commends the progress made in addressing the matter of transfer of funds out of the International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) Programmes. We note with satisfaction the inclusion of the Group's proposal in the decision on Biennial Programme and Budget of the OPCW for the term (2026-2027), which, amongst others, notes with concern that in past years there have been several transfers of not fully utilised funds out of the ICA.
19. The Group reiterates its call on the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to work collectively with a view to achieving the full and effective implementation of the ICA programmes. In this regard, we strongly urge that the relevant budgetary requirements and programmes of the Organisation are effectively and promptly executed. This will avoid or help to reduce the need for transfers between major programmes, including consideration of the retention of unspent funds for ICA in a special fund.
20. The Group, while restating its principled position on the balanced implementation of all Articles of the Convention, remains convinced that the measures put in place for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI are of paramount importance for the reinforcement of capacity building for States Parties. As recommended by the EC decision C-16/DEC.10 dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011, the Group welcomes the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat, notably, on the new initiatives on the three focus areas of integrated chemicals management, enhancement of laboratory capabilities, and chemical knowledge promotion and exchange. It encourages the adoption of concrete measures that enable the implementation of the output of the Drafting Committee on Article XI.
21. The Group underscores the merits of consensus building as a means to adopting core decisions that are relevant to the objectives of the Convention. Consensus enables States Parties to avoid controversies that beset decision-making processes in ensuring the effective implementation of the mandate of the OPCW.

Mr. Chairperson,

22. The Group welcomes the decision of the CSP30 regarding the extension of the mandate of the OEWG on the current implementation of the rules of procedures governing the election of members of EC until the next CSP. The Group takes note of the proposal shared by the Chair of the CSP30 and encourages open dialogue and constructive consultations with all stakeholders in addition to the written submissions in an effort to reach consensus. The Group re-iterates its keenness to continue working with other States Parties towards finding common ground to guarantee States Parties' rights of choice during elections without restraints or undue procedural impositions or limitations.

23. The Group requests 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.