



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

STATEMENT BY

**H. E. DR. MRS. NIMOTA N. AKANBI, OON,
AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**

AND

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANISATION
FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AT THE
EIGHTEENTH (18TH) SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES (CSP-18),**

THE HAGUE, 2ND – 6TH DECEMBER, 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 18th Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are confident that your rich experience and diplomatic skill will be brought to bear on this Conference and steer it to a fruitful conclusion. I take this opportunity to assure you of the full cooperation and support of the Nigerian delegation in addressing the tasks ahead. Permit me to also pay deserving tribute to your immediate predecessor, Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa for the efficient manner in which he had conducted the affairs of the Conference over the past one year.

Let me also, through you, Mr. Chairman, express my thanks to the Director-General, Mr. Ahmet Uzumcu, for his opening statements on the activities of OPCW. I would like to commend him and his team for the efficient manner in which they have conducted the affairs of the Organization.

The Nigerian delegation wishes to align itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China by His Excellency, Mr. S. A. Araghchi, Deputy Minister for Legal and International Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the African Group by Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa.

This has been an extraordinary year for OPCW. The Organization has in 2013 witnessed the Third Review Conference of CWC, four sessions of the Executive Council, four Meetings of the Council namely 32nd to 35th, the use of chemical weapons with tragic consequences, and Nobel Peace Prize for 2013. I congratulate OPCW and its Director-General on the historic event of 11th October 2013 with the award of Nobel Peace Prize for 2013 bestowed on the Organization for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons. The award represents a major recognition of the work of OPCW by the international community and the confidence it places on the Organization in the achievement of its mandate. It also represents an important challenge for the Organization and the States Parties to live up to the trust and confidence that the international community places on them. It is our sincere belief that this award would act as an inspiration to all States Parties and the OPCW to demonstrate greater commitment and dedication towards attaining the goal of total elimination of chemical weapons from our planet.

Mr. Chairman,

As we begin the Eighteenth Conference of States Parties, I wish to reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and our support to OPCW in its mandate to achieve the purposes and objectives of the Convention through its full implementation. Nigeria accords high priority to all global efforts towards ending the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, including chemical weapons. To this end, Nigeria has, since becoming a State Party to CWC, strongly supported all efforts to achieve its fundamental objectives of prohibiting the production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer and use of chemical weapons, as well as their total destruction. Nigeria also attaches great importance to the fulfilment of Article X, which seeks to provide assistance and protection against the threat or use of chemical weapons, and of Article XI that promotes the peaceful uses of chemistry and the exchange of scientific and technical information. We place particular emphasis on fostering international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical weapons, an issue that will come up for discussion and possible decision at this Conference.

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As the Nigerian delegation noted during the 74th Session of the Executive Council in October, the number of adherents to CWC has now reached 190 making it the most universal multilateral instrument in the field of disarmament and international security. While acknowledging the significance of this worthy milestone, recent events in Syria have demonstrated the need for absolute universality of the Convention, and for the total destruction of all chemical weapon stockpiles worldwide. We must, therefore, strive to ensure that the few remaining States that have not yet joined the Convention accede to it as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

We have taken note of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013) and the two decisions of the Executive Council relating to the situation in Syria as well as the call by the Director-General for concerted action by States Parties in realizing the target dates identified by these decisions and the resolution in terms of ensuring sufficiency of funds. It is gratifying to note that the Director-General has established a special trust fund in line with the request of the Executive Council. We, therefore, call on States Parties in a position to do so to contribute generously to the special trust fund. My delegation is pleased with the outcome of negotiations in the Executive Council on the Programme and Budget of OPCW for 2014 and urges the Conference to adopt the budget with the same consensual spirit demonstrated in the Council. It is important, however, that funding be provided for the continuation of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention otherwise known as OPCW Programme for Africa and all issues relating to international cooperation and assistance.

Nigeria encourages a follow-up process to the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention including the updated matrix of actionable items identified at the Third Review Conference itself.

Finally, the Nigerian delegation supports the Executive Council in its recommendation to this Conference for renewal of appointment of the Director-General, Mr. Ahmet Uzumci, for one further term of four years with effect from 25 July 2014.

My delegation is also pleased to refer to the Statement of the Director-General yesterday announcing the appointment of a new Legal Adviser for OPCW in the person of Dr. Olufemi Elias, a Nigerian citizen, and to congratulate the Director-General and Dr. Elias on the appointment.

We wish to request that this Statement be circulated as an official document of the Eighteenth Conference of States Parties to CWC.

Thank you.