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ARGENTINA

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HÉCTOR HORACIO SALVADOR
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE OPCW AT THE
NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Madam Chairperson, Ambassador Mrđen Korać,

The delegation of Argentina welcomes you and the authorities that have been elected to conduct this Nineteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

At the same time, we recognise Ambassador Sa'ad Abdul Majeed Ibrahim Al-Ali of Iraq for his effective work at the head of the past session.

We are at your service, Madam Ambassador, and trust in your well known professionalism and high level of skill in leading this session to achieving its desired results.

We would also especially like to mention those who have led the Executive Council over the past year and in that sense, we would reiterate our recognition and appreciation of Ambassador Olexander Horin of Ukraine and the current Chairperson, Ambassador Álvaro Moerzinger of Uruguay, whose appointment honours the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Director-General Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü has presented a detailed report on the status of the Organisation and the various actions that are being developed. We have also heard the inspiring message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In combination with the other statements that were made, including that of Minister Koenders of the Netherlands, we are encouraged and inspired to move forward with the tasks that remain ahead at this Conference.

While I cannot hope to address everything, I would like to make some brief comments that will help us reflect on the present and future role of this Organisation, the full, effective, and non-discriminatory actions which we fully support.

Certainly, the complete elimination of chemical weapons—this Organisation's central objective—makes up part of Argentina's position in pursuit of non-proliferation and disarmament. In particular, Argentina joins all those who firmly condemn the use of chemical weapons or the use of chemicals as warfare weapons by anyone and under any circumstances.



My country also joins the restated call to possessor States to take all measures at their disposal to move forward with the complete destruction of their chemical weapons stockpile in the shortest time possible in compliance with the decisions taken by this Organisation and the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The complete achievement of these fundamental objectives requires the full participation of the entire international community. It is for this reason that we reaffirm that the universality of the Convention is a key challenge. We welcome the actions that are being carried out by the Technical Secretariat with this purpose in mind and we encourage all States Parties in the position to do so to join these efforts.

The successful work of the OPCW in the removal, destruction, and subsequent verification of the destruction of the chemical weapons declared by the Syrian Arab Republic deserves international recognition.

We agree that there are still unresolved issues, among which are the destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities and securing from the Syrian Arab Republic the most precise radiographic overview possible of the entirety of the chemical weapons programme developed in the past. These processes are under way.

On the other hand, we support the Fact-Finding Mission in said country. Work should continue with the goal of clarifying the facts and coming to definitive conclusions that should then be objectively analysed.

In reiterating general condemnation, we believe that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be brought to justice.

As we approach these unresolved matters, we need to maintain and renew the attunement and spirit of cooperation and the joint efforts that have made the advances we have achieved possible, and which brought together the Technical Secretariat, the Member States, and the Syrian Government. A consensus should continue to form the primary basis for the decisions taken by the OPCW's organs.

We appreciate and recognise the work that has already been completed by the Technical Secretariat, including the reports by the Director-General regarding the review of practices relative to the OPCW's activity in Syria, and we underline the importance thereof in future and potential operations in the field.

We should continue to build a future without chemical weapons, putting our Organisation fully at the service of this objective, to which end we should assign increased importance to international cooperation, education, outreach, and awareness.

At the Third Review Conference, we agreed on the need to strengthen ties between the OPCW and the chemical industry. The connection between the industry and the Organisation was found to be significant in a variety of aspects, including among others verification operations that the OPCW must carry out, the promotion of scientific and technological development of the sector as well as economic development, the support of the sector in mitigating chemical emergencies, and its contribution to the promotion of the Convention. We see in this a useful complement helping countries to fully exercise their sovereign right to development, the use of technologies, sensitive and dual industries and activities in

state-of-the-art sectors, in accordance with their international commitments and national legislations.

For all of these reasons, we highlight the various initiatives of the Technical Secretariat in this regard.

Another fundamental actor in the international community with a connection to the Chemical Weapons Convention is the academic and scientific sector. The promotion of a culture of responsibility when it comes to scientific knowledge and raising awareness of the Convention are effective tools for preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Argentina supports the continued efforts of the Technical Secretariat in promoting all activities in Convention-related education and outreach.

In line with the development of responsible scientific knowledge, we value the recent proposal presented during the Executive Council to promote the adoption of a voluntary ethical oath in chemistry and for professionals in the field of chemistry.

Argentina is committed to the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention at a national level and contributes a variety of initiatives to collaborate with regional training. The most recent examples in this area have been the first regional meeting on education in the responsible application of knowledge of dual-use chemicals (April 2014), the advanced regional assistance and protection course on chemical emergency response (May 2014), and a regional training course for customs authorities of States Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean region on technical aspects of the transfers regime (October 2014), in addition to other national meetings and workshops.

Among the most recent events, this past November we held a national workshop on the responsible application of scientific knowledge at Universidad Nacional del Sur, Bahía Blanca, similar to the workshop held in Rosario in 2013 and where the results of the first regional meeting in April were used to develop the curriculum.

As we have in the past, we are willing to share with all of you the conclusions and results of this workshop. Furthermore, we also hope to address the results of the important Education for Peace conference which took place at OPCW Headquarters this past September, as well as the conclusions of the Scientific Advisory Board working group, which finalised its fruitful and important work in September this year, the conclusions of which have just been made available.

Our recognition goes out to the members of this group and all of the members of the Scientific Advisory Board.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the Technical Secretariat for its support and collaboration in the development of a variety of courses and workshops that were held in Argentina.

Looking ahead, we need to increase our efforts to develop international cooperation.

Following the approval of the decision of the Sixteenth Conference of the States Parties regarding the components of an agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI in December 2011 (C-16/DEC.10), a broad range of support has been added for improving

and extending the activities that the Organisation is developing for the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of said fundamental pillar of the OPCW.

We call on all of the States to participate in a constructive manner and demonstrate flexibility in the evolution of this discussion in an effort to achieve concrete results on this fundamental article of the Convention.

Yesterday we witnessed the first OPCW–The Hague Award Ceremony where Dr Robert Mathews of Australia and the Finnish Institute for the Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention were honoured as joint recipients. This distinction complements the international recognition of the OPCW expressed through the award of the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize to our Organisation for its contribution to international disarmament and peace. It has carved for itself a permanent role in the promotion of these objectives at a global level.

Along these lines, in preparation for the commemoration in Ieper in 2015, my delegation invites you to multiply these efforts to transform a century of mourning, since the first mass use of chemical weapons into a time of hope, a period in which the world will finally become free of this type of weapon and in which this Organisation will gauge the experience that will be useful and inspirational for the sake of peace, non-proliferation, and disarmament.

I kindly request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Conference.

Thank you very much.

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