



OPCW

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GUATEMALA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR GABRIEL AGUILERA PERALTA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUATEMALA TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

1. On behalf of my delegation and myself, I would like to convey our congratulations on your election as Chairperson of the Twentieth Conference of the States Parties. We are confident that you will successfully oversee the work during this session and we take advantage of this opportunity to assure you of our total support and cooperation.
2. I would also like to voice the appreciation of our Group to the outgoing Chairperson, H.E. Vesela Mrđen Korać, previously the Ambassador of Croatia to the Netherlands, whom we recognise as having led the work of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties with success and dedication.
3. We have listened with interest to the opening statement by the Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, and his report on the activities carried out by the OPCW since the last session of the Conference. We voice our appreciation for the successful management of the Organisation under his direction. We wish to extend equal appreciation to the Technical Secretariat for its dedicated and outstanding work in support of the Organisation and the States Parties.
4. We believe that the submission of the reports by the Director-General and the various organs that comprise the Organisation, as well as all of the reports provided by the Vice-Chairpersons and facilitators of the various working groups, are of great importance.
5. Guatemala welcomes the recent accession of Angola and Myanmar to the Convention. This is an important step toward universality. We call upon the remaining States that have not yet acceded to do so as soon as possible and without delay, and thus contribute to the creation of a world free of chemical weapons for the good of both present and future generations.
6. My delegation has noted the status reports on the destruction of chemical weapons by possessor States, including those possessing abandoned chemical weapons, and calls for the continuation of all possible efforts toward the soonest possible and effective elimination of all existing chemical weapons.



7. We note the reports on the destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic. We recognise the urgency of the circumstances and for this reason, we support the continuation of efforts toward achieving the definitive and prompt elimination of all weapons, as well as the production and storage facilities that have yet to be destroyed.
8. Guatemala is attentively following the consultations of the Technical Secretariat's Declaration Assessment Team with representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning said country's initial declaration. In this regard, we call upon the Syrian Arab Republic and the OPCW Technical Secretariat to expedite the efforts to remedy the discrepancies and ambiguities identified in said declaration by the Technical Secretariat in the report submitted to the Eightieth Session of the Executive Council (EC-80/P/S/1).
9. We have noted the updates from the Fact-Finding Mission and we are confident that it will succeed in its mandate in full.
10. As regards resolution 2235 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council, via which the Joint Investigative Mission of the OPCW and the United Nations was established in order to identify the party responsible for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, we do hope that the Mechanism will fully succeed in its mandate and at the same time, we vehemently condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance.
11. We voice special concern regarding the threat posed by the ability of non-State actors to obtain chemical weapons and related technology.
12. We believe that promoting international cooperation in the use of chemistry in activities not prohibited by the Convention constitutes one of the most important pillars of this Organisation. In this regard, we fully support the right of each State to develop their own chemical industry and participate in the broadest possible exchange of substances, equipment, and information in the field of chemistry, as per the provisions set out in Article XI of the Convention. The peaceful use of chemistry is essential for the technological and scientific development of our region. We believe that cooperation in this field deserves greater impetus based on the recommendations that the States Parties have voiced.
13. The implementation of the Convention in line with Article VII is clearly an important objective. We have noted the advances achieved in national implementation of the Convention, and at the same time we make a call to all of the States that have not yet done so to contact the Technical Secretariat to coordinate the efforts necessary for the full implementation of the Convention.
14. Thus, we call upon the Technical Secretariat to continue developing all of these measures—as it has been doing to date—while taking into account the obstacles and budgetary limitations of each State so that implementation can be effective and appropriate.
15. Likewise, we would like to emphasise that cooperation ought to extend to all actions that would permit all States Parties to receive assistance and protection against potential

attacks or the threat of an attack using chemical weapons, as per the provisions of Article X of the Convention, and it should also lead to improved national practices and measures for implementation in line with what is stipulated in Article VII of the Convention.

16. Guatemala highlights the importance of the retreat for Permanent Representatives to the OPCW held last 1 October, during which the challenges facing the Organisation and the future of both the Convention and the Organisation were discussed. At that event, interest in reinforcing the object and purpose of the Convention was emphasised, as was interest in examining future contributions.
17. We are aware that there are still goals and objectives that have yet to be reached in order to achieve full implementation of all of the Convention's provisions, especially as regards international cooperation. For this reason, we call for redoubling efforts to achieve these ends. The discussion was a step in the right direction.
18. Guatemala recognises and appreciates the excellent work carried out by Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Panama, His Excellency Mr Willys Delvalle, as a facilitator in achieving a consensus on the draft decision on establishing the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach. We also note the importance and excellent work conducted by the facilitator of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, as well as the establishment of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and we congratulate him with his successful facilitation.

Thank you.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Conference of the States Parties and published on the Organisation's external web page.

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