



OPCW

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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

COSTA RICA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SERGIO UGALDE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

1. I would like to express my sincere congratulations on behalf of both myself and my delegation on your election as Chairperson of the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. We are confident that you will successfully conduct the work of this Conference, and we offer you all of our support and cooperation.
2. My country has noted the opening statement by the Director-General, His Excellency Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, and his report on the activities carried out by the OPCW since the last Conference session. We wish to voice our appreciation for the OPCW's strong performance under your direction. Likewise, I would like to voice our acknowledgement of the work done by the Technical Secretariat in support of the Organisation and the States Parties.
3. Costa Rica is proud to be a peaceful country, without an army and free of chemical weapons. This fact makes our commitment to continue lending support to the OPCW even stronger in order to achieve universality of the Convention and fully reach the goal of achieving a world completely free of chemical weapons. For this reason, we welcome the new accessions.
4. My country has noted the reports on the status of the destruction of chemical weapons by possessor States, including abandoned chemical weapons. We call for all possible efforts to be taken in order to eliminate all of the chemical weapons in all possessor States in the soonest possible time.
5. Costa Rica reiterates its vehement condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and, for this reason, we express our great concern regarding the most recent use in the Syrian town of Marea, according to the findings that have been established. We believe it critical to achieve the goal of ensuring that the Syrian Arab Republic is—definitively and as soon as possible—a territory free of both chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities for the good and protection of its own people. We have also noted the latest news from the Fact-Finding Mission.
6. My country has been attentively following the consultations with the Technical Secretariat's Declaration Assessment Team and representatives of the Syrian Arab



Republic regarding said country's initial declaration. In this regard, I call for these efforts to be fast-tracked in order to resolve the outstanding issues with the initial declaration as identified by the Secretariat in its report to the Eightieth Session of the Executive Council (EC-80/P/S/1).

7. Likewise, Costa Rica has been following with interest resolution 2235 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council, via which the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the OPCW and the United Nations was established in order to identify those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, which will make it possible to objectively identify the guilty party in line with international law.
8. My delegation would like to again bring attention to the mandate set out in Article X of the Convention, which is essential for the implementation of assistance and protection programmes for the States Parties, and in line with Article XI states that cooperation must constitute combined actions on the part of both the States Parties and the OPCW in order to foster national capabilities and stimulate implementation of best practices. In this regard, we encourage the Organisation to continue and increase—within the framework of the Convention—the efforts to provide personnel and training in the field of chemical security, a transfer regimen, and chemical assistance to the States Parties that require such.
9. My delegation believes that the peaceful use of chemistry for the benefit of all human beings is a universal intention, but this means responsible and careful use. Progress toward achieving that goal requires constant, robust supervision, as well as significant strengthening of international cooperation. We also believe it necessary to maintain strong monitoring of large chemical industries and ensure that said monitoring can rely on the cooperation and financing of these industries.
10. Thus, we believe it important to strengthen the regimen under Article VI, covering activities that are not prohibited by the Convention, specifically with regard to the prevention of the diversion of dual-use chemicals, materials, and equipment.
11. My delegation highlights the membership of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and we wish the members success under the able direction of Her Excellency María Teresa Infante, the Ambassador of Chile.
12. As we believe in the potential of this legal tool, Costa Rica will continue to work tirelessly toward the universality and the effective implementation of the Convention, which will make it possible to achieve the objectives set out therein and have a real impact on peoples' lives. Remaining true to this commitment, my country has played an active role in the Conference of the States Parties; we attended the Thirteenth Regional Conference of the National Authorities of Latin America and the Caribbean on chemical weapons in 2012. At present, we have organised three assistance and protection courses on chemical emergency response and industrial chemicals for specialists with the support of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.
13. I would like to again mention the recommendation of the Executive Council at its Eightieth Session to submit the draft decision on establishing the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach, the product of the work of many delegations under the

remarkable direction of His Excellency Willys Delvalle, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Panama, who served as facilitator.

14. In conclusion, we reiterate our wishes of success for this Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and we thank you, Mr Chairperson. I respectfully request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Conference.

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