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PERU

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CARLOS HERRERA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PERU TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the delegation of Peru, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of this Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and we offer our support and collaboration for its success. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chairperson, Her Excellency Vesela Mrđen Korać, Ambassador of Croatia, for her distinguished work as Chairperson of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

My delegation would also like to thank His Excellency Álvaro Moerzinger, Ambassador of Uruguay, for his successful coordination as Chairperson of the Executive Council from May 2014 to May 2015, and His Excellency Francesco Azzarello, Ambassador of Italy, for the excellent work he is doing as Council Chairperson.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement by the Non-Aligned Movement and China delivered by the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

As we begin our statement, the delegation of Peru would like to highlight the work of the OPCW as a highly successful international body, having noted the considerable progress achieved in the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles.

The important advances in the destruction of chemical stockpiles—recognised by the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013—ought to serve as an incentive for the OPCW and the States Parties to take advantage of this moment in time to redouble their efforts toward achieving universality of the Convention and realise a greater contribution in obtaining and maintaining international peace and security.

We welcome the recent accessions of Myanmar and Angola to the Convention and we are pleased to have them here at this Conference of the States Parties. At the same time, we urge the few countries that have not yet done so to begin the process to accede to the Convention as soon as possible and to contribute to building a world free of chemical weapons for the good of both present and future generations. In this regard, we support the establishment of joint mechanisms of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat, which will provide the support necessary to accede to the Convention on a case-by-case basis.



We have noted the reports on the progress made in the destruction of chemical weapons by possessor States, including abandoned weapons, and we reaffirm that the destruction of all types of chemical weapons must be completed in the shortest possible time, in keeping with the provisions of the Convention and the full implementation of the corresponding decisions that have been adopted.

As a member of the Executive Council, Peru has continued to support the crucial decisions related to the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic and views them as a step forward toward preventing any further suffering of the Syrian people.

My delegation is attentively following the continued conversations between the Declaration Assessment Team of the Technical Secretariat and representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic on that country's initial declaration. Twenty months have passed since the Declaration Assessment Team's first visit to the Syrian Arab Republic, and there are still major concerns to date regarding the accuracy of the initial declaration. In this regard, we reiterate the call to the Syrian Arab Republic to accelerate its efforts in coordination with the Secretariat in order to identify errors, discrepancies, and omissions and, at the same time, guarantee the accuracy and integrity of the initial declaration. We are also very much looking forward to the report that the Director-General will be presenting ahead of the Eighty-First Session of the Executive Council, which is expected to address all outstanding issues and identify the issues with which it has not been possible to make any progress.

We have taken note of the Director-General's Note via which resolution 2235 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council was transmitted on the establishment of the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the OPCW and the United Nations in Syria in order to identify the party responsible for the recent use of chemical weapons in said country. We are confident it will strengthen collaboration between the OPCW and the United Nations as they work together to achieve the goals of the Joint Investigative Mechanism.

Further, my delegation welcomes the publication of the three reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission, which concluded that the incidents in the governorate of Idlib "likely involved the use of one or more toxic chemicals—probably containing the element chlorine—as a weapon" and, in the case of the incidents that took place in Marea, the Mission "was able to confirm with the utmost confidence that at least two people were exposed to sulfur mustard".

In this regard, Peru reiterates its major concern about these findings and once again voices its most vehement condemnation of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, by anyone and under any circumstances.

We believe it timely and necessary that the work of the Mission continue investigating the facts of alleged incidents involving chemical weapons that may exist. In this sense, we urge the parties in the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully and effectively with the OPCW Mission. Likewise, we await the next final report of the Mission addressing the incidents described in the communications examined by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and Head of the National Authority of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The full implementation of the Convention, in keeping with Article VII, is a fundamental goal of the Organisation. We are concerned that only a small percentage of the States Parties

has fully implemented the Convention, and that many States still do not have the tools necessary to adequately develop their national capabilities. The implementation of the Convention is of vital importance for the trust and security that it is meant to provide for all States Parties.

For this reason, we call upon those States Parties that have not yet done so to contact the Technical Secretariat in order to coordinate the steps necessary to carry out solutions that are both adequate and adapted to the specific conditions of each State in conducting its national implementation measures. As such, we support the development of incentives for the States Parties that have not yet done so to implement the Convention, starting with the initial measures set out in Article VII.

Cooperation should extend to actions that will allow all States Parties to receive assistance and protection against potential attacks or threats of the use of chemical weapons and incidents involving toxic substances in compliance with the provisions of Article X of the Convention. In this regard, we would like to again mention the basic course on responding to chemical warfare agents and incidents with toxic industrial chemicals, scheduled for 7 to 11 March 2016 in the city of Lima, Peru.

As such, my delegation believes it is of great importance to more strongly incentivise international cooperation in relation to the expansion of the chemical industry and trade among all States Parties, without discrimination and under conditions of security. In this regard, international cooperation must promote the peaceful use of chemistry and the free transfer and exchange of scientific knowledge and technologies. This matter also implies the development of other forms of cooperation such as, for example, responding to potential attacks with chemical weapons by non-State actors.

In light of all of these factors, international cooperation—one of the pillars of the Convention—should be adequately developed and must be reflected in the OPCW budget. We firmly believe that activities in the field of cooperation must be considered based on their own merits, not budgetary limitations.

We reiterate our most vehement condemnation of terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations and, at the same time, we pay tribute to the victims of the horrific acts of terrorism that have recently taken place in various locations around the world. In this regard, we do hope that the States will find a way to effectively and clearly tackle this threat, which presumes the existence of non-State actors in possession of chemical weapons. Peru supports the work that the OPCW is doing in this area and believes it should be strengthened in the future. Coordination with other international organisations takes on great importance, as does the reinforcement of assistance and cooperation programmes aimed at improving national prevention and response capabilities, thus helping States maintain readiness to act against non-State actors in possession of chemical weapons.

We welcome the appointment of Her Excellency María Teresa Infante, Ambassador of Chile, as facilitator of the Sub-Working Group with the important task of exploring what other contribution the OPCW can make in confronting the hostile use of toxic chemicals by non-State actors. We will play an active role in the ongoing discussions on drawing up specific recommendations for consideration by the States Parties.

My delegation believes that education and outreach will play an increasingly important role in the future of the OPCW, broadening knowledge of the peaceful use of chemistry, and preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. For this reason, we support the recommendation of the Executive Council adopted at its Eightieth Session on the establishment of the Advisory Board of Education and Outreach. This is the result of the collaboration between the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat, a valuable contribution towards strengthening the Convention and, in this regard, a tool more for the service of the international community in promoting its objectives.

In conclusion I would like to restate my country's commitment to strengthening and consolidating the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention—an efficient tool against the use and re-emergence of these weapons—and the certainty of contributing to the objective of achieving a world free of chemical weapons, where international cooperation is fully guaranteed in order to achieve the goals of the Convention.

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

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