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**CHILE**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE  
TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates of the States Parties and colleagues,

Please allow me, Ambassador Ibarrola, to join those who came before me to extend a warm welcome and congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of this session. We are confident that under your management, this session will end successfully and our region will recognise it as such.

I would also like to note the valuable work of his predecessor, Ambassador Vesela Mrđen Korać, and Ambassador Francesco Azzarello, Chairperson of the Executive Council, as well as the Vice-Chairpersons and facilitators who are supporting the work of the Organisation under the distinguished management of the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement by the Non-Aligned Movement and China pronounced this morning by the head of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This statement brought together important elements expressing political agreements on the future of this Organisation.

Over the course of this year, the OPCW has demonstrated once again its productive work in advancing towards a world free of chemical weapons, the fruits of the collective labour of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat.

As we recognise the major advances made in the destruction of chemical weapons, we must remain active until this task has been completed. We urge the States that have such obligations to continue their efforts to overcome any obstacles to finalise destruction in the shortest possible time.

The universality of the Convention is an indispensable condition for achieving its full purpose in an atmosphere of international peace and security. We recognise the tenacious efforts being made by the Technical Secretariat and we are pleased to welcome two new countries, Myanmar and Angola, to our community this year. We hope that this positive development will encourage the few countries that have not yet done so to accede to the Convention without further delay and take advantage of the guarantees that the Convention offers.



We participated in the commemorative ceremony marking the centenary of the first large-scale use of chemical weapons in Ieper in April this year. This event, in addition to honouring the memory of the victims of such an atrocity, reaffirms the commitment to eliminate these weapons for all time and promote the peaceful use of science. For this very reason, we support the Director-General's proposal to declare 29 April as OPCW Day, and to continue observing the day commemorating all of the victims of chemical warfare in November each year.

Another pillar of the Convention that we find particularly important is international cooperation, which is indispensable for progressing towards a broader exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of non-prohibited chemical activity, thus contributing to the expansion of industry and trade among States Parties. We firmly believe that in addition to these positive effects, cooperative programmes are an incentive for some countries to work in a more decisive manner in other areas envisaged by the Convention.

While we recognise the work of the Technical Secretariat and the generous support of some States, there is still room to develop new forms of cooperation. Thus, we are confident that with the assistance of the Technical Secretariat, we can continue constructive discussions on the new proposals that have been and will be presented within the framework of Article XI.

Bearing in mind that this is a time of transition for the Organisation during which the inspections of the destruction of chemical stockpiles are on the decline, and with a firm belief in the need to adequately fund programmes in support of the commitment to the States that do not have a developed chemical industry, our country supports the 2016 Programme and Budget submitted for consideration by this Conference. These programmes must be sustained so that they can be effective. We wish to emphasise the advances made by the Secretariat in terms of the development of programmes and budgets, and we believe that strategic planning criteria must continue to factor into that process. As States Parties, we want to take part in the process addressing the future of the Organisation, as well as its human resources needs in the mid- and long-term outlook.

Along with the importance of national implementation measures, our country—in addition to meeting standard compliance with its obligations in terms of declarations—can state that it is in an advanced stage of preparing legislation specific to the Convention. Thus, we will begin using the secure information exchange (SIX) system, which will make possible the secure transmission of classified documents and is greatly beneficial to the States Parties. We also support the coordinating efforts of the Technical Secretariat aimed at putting into place appropriate assistance measures adapted to the realities of each country.

As regards the future priorities of the Organisation, the documents that the Technical Secretariat submitted for the consideration of the States Parties and the discussion that took place at the retreat this past October have contributed elements of both content and procedure toward this end. This must be an inclusive and holistic discussion where the basic pillars of the Convention are present, in addition to the concerns of the various States Parties and the consensus-based decisions reached at the Third Review Conference. As States Parties, we have the fundamental responsibility to take part in defining the Organisation's strategies in collaboration with the Technical Secretariat. Toward this end, an open-ended working group would provide significant support in developing a document with proposals for the Fourth Review Conference.

Together with the importance of advances in universality, destruction, and cooperation, it is also necessary to ensure that the verification regime is sufficient for dealing with new challenges in security and technological developments. It is also important to consider the narrowing gap between chemistry and biology, and how that can be addressed within a common framework. It is equally important that we improve our capabilities to prevent and confront contingencies such as the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors. All of this must be done in collaboration with the relevant international organisations, industry, and the academic community.

When it comes to ensuring the full implementation of the Convention and preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, education and outreach play a fundamental role. For this reason, we support the establishment of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach, facilitated by H.E. Mr Delvalle, Ambassador of Panama. We support the decisions appointing the members, bearing in mind an adequate balance of experience and geographical and gender representation.

On this same matter, we welcome The Hague Ethical Guidelines, the result of an initiative from Germany supported by the Technical Secretariat and the Scientific Advisory Board. Our National Authorities have already distributed these Guidelines in the academic community and the national chemical industry to promote their consideration and domestic implementation.

Among the efforts made by the Director-General in terms of ensuring the full implementation of the Convention, we welcome the standardisation of cooperation between the OPCW and the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) in education and outreach, chemical security and protection, and verification. We also value the support that this Council has contributed to the OPCW's work.

Chile shares the concerns about the risks of using central nervous system-acting chemicals as riot control agents and the potential use thereof as chemical weapons. My country does not support the development of these substances as riot control agents. For this reason, we have worked with 19 other States to develop a document in which, in addition to explaining the reasons behind our concerns, we also call for an open discussion with the participation of the Technical Secretariat. This should be done to develop recommendations for these chemicals to help prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and respond to the concerns facing the Convention.

As a member of the Executive Council, Chile has supported the decisions on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as those referred to in the Fact-Finding Mission reports on the use of chemical weapons in said country. We have always favoured a consensus in adopting these decisions.

We note the significant progress achieved in the elimination of declared chemical weapons and the destruction of production facilities, and we look forward to the soonest possible conclusion of these processes. Here, we recognise the contributions of the various States Parties, the intensive work of the Technical Secretariat, and the cooperation of the Syrian authorities.

Regarding the consultations aimed at resolving gaps and discrepancies in the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic and in light of the important matters that have yet to be resolved via the consultations that said State Party is holding with the Technical Secretariat, we reiterate our

call to the Syrian Government to redouble its efforts to guarantee the accuracy and completeness of its declaration to put to rest any and all questions that may exist regarding the termination of its chemical weapons programme. We also voice our recognition of the work done of Declaration Assessment Team.

We cannot help but once again state that the findings of the various reports submitted by the Fact-Finding Mission regarding the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic are grounds for grave concern. In spite of the decisions adopted by the OPCW Executive Council and resolutions 2118 (2013) and 2209 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council, one of the most recent investigations confirmed with the utmost confidence the use of sulfur mustard, while another found that the events investigated could have involved the use as a weapon of one or more toxic chemicals.

Facing these facts, Chile supported the decisions adopted by the OPCW Executive Council on 4 February 2015 and 23 November 2015, not only because we share these concerns, but also because as we face the seriousness of the findings and in light of the Organisation's credibility, we are convinced that the Executive Council had no choice but to act.

The repetition of the actions contradictory to the Convention and international law bring us to reiterate our most vehement condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any and all circumstances; we also again state that those responsible for said attacks must be held accountable for their actions. In parallel with this position, our country supported resolution 2235 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council, establishing the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the OPCW and the United Nations. Cooperative efforts between these two organisations, which have led to important results, are essential for strengthening this process.

We reiterate once again our support for the efforts of the Director-General and the professional effort made by the investigation teams, including in challenging circumstances. We remain supportive of the continued work of the Fact-Finding Mission to duly investigate all credible allegations involving the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The alleged use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals as weapons by non-State actors demonstrates the importance of the discussions taking place within the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, led by His Excellency Dr Joe Tony Aidoo, Ambassador of Ghana, as well as the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors. We trust that these working groups will provide the States Parties with a space to openly exchange points of view and discuss how the Organisation can continue to contribute to global efforts to counter chemical terrorism.

In this context, we welcome the valuable contribution of the Technical Secretariat, among others, via the development of documents for discussion on the responsibility of non-State actors, and measures for preventing and responding to the hostile use of toxic chemicals. We invite all delegations to pool their efforts to develop concrete recommendations in these areas, with consideration for the potential offered by existing tools as well.

I kindly request, Mr Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of this Conference and published on the OPCW webpage.

Thank you very much.

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