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BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AND CHINA
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI
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VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, I would like to welcome you, Ambassador Dr Christoph Israng of Germany, as the Chairperson of the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties and express our confidence in your able leadership to steer this conference to a successful conclusion.

We also wish to take this opportunity to appreciate the Chairperson of the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola-Nicolín of Mexico for all his dedicated efforts during the Twentieth Session.

Since this is the first statement delivered to the Conference of the States Parties by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, I would like to express my appreciation to the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H. E. Alireza Jahangiri, for his dedication and fully fledged efforts to coordinate the Non-Aligned Movement and China in the OPCW.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China associate themselves with the Final Document and Margarita Declaration of the 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held from 13 to 18 September 2016 in Margarita Island, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

We express our thanks to the Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his informative and comprehensive report delivered in this session and appreciate his efforts and his team in the Technical Secretariat to promote the role of the Organisation in the international disarmament regime and to carry out its functions under the Convention.



The Non-Aligned Movement and China, while committed to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention, which is essential for the realisation of the objectives and purposes of the Convention, acknowledge that the implementation of the Convention will contribute to the international and regional peace and security.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. Consequently, the Non-Aligned Movement and China reiterate their long-standing principled position toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in line with the first paragraph of the preamble of the Convention.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China continue to underline that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention, legal norms and standards of the international community. We also affirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China stress that the total destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons, is a fundamental pillar of the Convention.

Noting with serious concern that the final extended deadline (29 April 2012) for the destruction of chemical weapons was not met by certain possessor States Parties, the Non-Aligned Movement and China stress that the destruction of chemical weapons is the fundamental and top priority of the Organisation and urge all possessor States Parties to take all necessary measures to ensure their compliance with the provisions of the Convention and relevant decisions of the policy-making organs.

In this regard, we welcome the completion of destruction of the remaining chemical weapons in four chemical weapons destruction facilities in the Russian Federation in 2015.

We also wish to emphasise the determination expressed by the Third Review Conference that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons, namely old chemical weapons, abandoned chemical weapons and chemical weapons stockpiles shall be completed in the shortest possible time in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and its Annex on Implementation and Verification, and with the full application of the relevant decisions adopted by the policy-making organs.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China attach great importance to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and strongly call on States not Party to the Convention to accede to it without further delay and preconditions. We also emphasise that States remaining outside the Convention should not be able to take advantage of any of the benefits it offers to the States Parties.

Recalling the decisions of the Executive Council at its meetings with respect to the elimination and destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons and welcoming the cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the implementation of the relevant Executive Council decisions towards the elimination of its chemical weapons, the Non-Aligned Movement and

China welcome the significant progress achieved in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons and in the destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities.

We take note of the work done so far by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), and look forward to receiving its reports on its ongoing activities. We expect the approach followed by the FFM teams would be uniform and consistent.

We also take note of the letters by the Director-General, in which he forwarded to the States Parties the reports prepared by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM).

The Non-Aligned Movement and China are deeply concerned about reports on the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals in terrorist attacks and condemn the use of chemical weapons by terrorist groups against civilians in Syria and call upon the Technical Secretariat to investigate all reports on the use of chemical weapons and keep the States Parties informed about steps taken.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China condemn the use of the chemical weapons by terrorist groups in Iraq against the civilians of the city of Taza, Iraqi armed forces and Peshmerga, and are deeply concerned by the threats of the use of chemical weapons by terrorist groups.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China express their deep concern regarding the attempt to accuse other members of using chemical weapons on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations made by open sources, including non-governmental entities. This trend can cause a dangerous precedent in the future work of the OPCW.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China express its deep satisfaction following the announcement made by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), confirming the successful removal of precursors chemicals from Libya, on 27 August 2016, as part of an ongoing operation undertaken in close collaboration with the Libyan National Authority, to verifiably eliminate remaining chemical weapons stockpiles, in line with the obligation of Libya pursuant to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China attach great importance to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of Article XI and emphasise the need to speed up efforts in this regard.

We are convinced that the adoption of an action plan for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is paramount and cannot be excluded. However, for the sake of reaching consensus, the Non-Aligned Movement and China developed a working paper containing a broad range of proposals for consideration by the States Parties. We look forward to constructive discussion on the proposals submitted by all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat.

In this regard, we welcome the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat to enhance the implementation of Article XI, and we believe that this requires continuous collaboration between the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties.

We also underline that the following elements should be taken into consideration by the policy-making organs of the Organisation, inter alia:

- (a) Allocation of adequate financial and human resources in the annual Programme and Budget of the Organisation for the implementation of Article XI related programmes including concrete projects which are sensitive to the regional economic needs of States Parties;
- (b) Adoption of necessary actions or decisions to implement the relevant recommendations of the Third Review Conference regarding Article XI; and
- (c) Promotion of international cooperation for the benefit of States Parties through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field and removal of any discriminatory restrictions such as unilateral sanctions against other States Parties that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention and affect the Convention's long-term viability and have an adverse impact on the existing trust among the States Parties.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China welcome holding the first review and evaluation workshop on the component of an agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI on 22 of November 2016 and emphasise the need for development of an assessment mechanism by States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to evaluate the efficiency and the impact of the activities undertaken on the implementation of Article XI and express their willingness to hold such workshops annually.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage the promotion of the widest participation of States Parties in the workshop on Article XI, scheduled to take place in 2017. Bearing in mind the possibility to increase the components of the framework for the implementation of Article XI, all States Parties will be able to submit their proposals for implementing other specific measures in this regard and the outcome of the workshop shall be informed by the Chairman in the next session of the Conference.

We would like to inform the Conference that the Non-Aligned Movement and China will circulate a position paper on the implementation of Article XI.

In the context of the implementation of Article VII, the Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage all the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue to provide meaningful assistance and technical support to the States Parties to enhance national capacities, at their request, and to come up with appropriate and tailored solutions to overcome the practical difficulties and resource constraints encountered by individual States Parties in carrying out their national implementation measures.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X. We stress the need for all States Parties and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to respond to the increasing demand of States Parties for assistance.

While paying due respect to all chemical weapons victims and their families, the Non-Aligned Movement and China, in light of the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011), appreciate the States Parties and the Director-General who contributed to the Trust Fund for the

International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons. We welcome the activation and activities of the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons and encourage the States Parties to contribute to its Voluntary Trust Fund.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China encourage the States Parties to facilitate and make materials and equipment-related assistance available to other States Parties and to assist and support the victims of chemical weapons, without undue restrictions.

On the follow-up of the Third Review Conference recommendations, the Non-Aligned Movement and China believe that the transparent, holistic and balanced approach shall prevail for implementation of these recommendations. In this context, selective approaches shall be prevented. We recall that the Matrix was developed as a mechanism to comprehensively monitor the implementation of the Third Review Conference recommendations. The Non-Aligned Movement and China therefore welcome the update on the progress-made by the Technical Secretariat.

On the Draft Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2017, we wish to recognise the Director-General for proposing a draft budget based on a zero nominal growth and we value the work done by the Technical Secretariat and facilitators in order to achieve a balanced budget among the different programmes of the OPCW. It is worth mentioning that the budget for 2017 consists of a slight decrease compared to last year's budget without affecting the overall work of the Organisation, and which takes into account the economic realities that States Parties are currently facing. The Budget proposal reflects the importance given to international cooperation and assistance as well as the commitments of the States Parties in this regard.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China welcomes the continued implementation of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapon Convention by the Technical Secretariat, which has been the signature undertaking through which the OPCW has been engaging African States Parties in the implementation of the Convention's objectives in the African Continent. Moreover, the Non-Aligned Movement and China notes, with gratitude, the Director-General's Note, (EC-83/DG.15 C-21/DG.13, dated 15 September 2016) on the aforementioned programme that is now in its Third Phase of a three-year period. The Non-Aligned Movement and China notes that the Technical Secretariat intends to continue in the next cycle with a Fourth Phase of the Programme for another three-year period, from 2017 to 2019. Non-Aligned Movement and China is, therefore, pleased and very desirous to see this Programme continue in an appropriate, efficient, equitable and sustainable manner, with regular budgetary allotments.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China reemphasise that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat is to be fair and transparent and stress that in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Convention, the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. It is imperative to ensure that the Technical Secretariat observe an equitable geographical and balanced gender representation, particularly at the professional level.

With regard to the future priorities of the Organisation, the Non-Aligned Movement and China believe that the main focus of the Organisation should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons. We will take active part in the discussions to be held in this regard from a constructive position, with a strong belief that all pillars of the

Convention would be treated in a balanced manner, including, the ones related to international cooperation, assistance and protection issues, amongst others.

We strongly support dealing comprehensively and holistically with issues related to the future of the Organisation and firmly believe that the discussions need to be brought within the parameters of the policy-making organs (PMOs) guided and driven by States Parties inside the OPCW with a view to produce binding decisions to be adopted.

We welcome the establishment of the open-ended Working Group on the Future Priorities of the OPCW based on proposal by the Non-Aligned Movement and China, to discuss and formulate a document in this regard in order to be considered at the Fourth Review Conference. We reiterate the importance of this working group and encourage its close cooperation with all regional groups. We appreciate the efforts by the Co-Chairs Ambassador Sabine Nölke of Canada and Ambassador Bruce Koloane of South Africa in formulating the methods and programme of work, and encourage them to continue cooperation with all States Parties.

We believe that the process of negotiation in this regard has to be transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory and must reflect the interests and concerns of all States Parties. We stress that States Parties should take the lead in this process and urge that any decision in this regard should be taken by the policy-making organs of the Organisation.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China commend the continuation of the work of the Chairpersons of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors. We appreciate the efforts made by Ambassador Tony Aidoo of Ghana and Ambassador María Teresa Infante of Chile. We take note of the latest report presented by the Chairperson of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors referring to what the OPCW is doing within the framework of the Convention to strengthen its capabilities in the field of prevention. We also take note of the diverse views on this issue and encourage further consultations.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China are deeply concerned about recent reports on the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals in terrorist attacks and call upon the Technical Secretariat to investigate all reports on the use of chemical weapons and to keep the States Parties informed about steps taken.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China recognise the importance of education and outreach programmes in achieving the main objectives of the Convention, in this regard we welcome the work done by the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach. We also welcome all regional meetings held to contribute in formulating recommendations on education and outreach.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China reaffirm the importance of upholding the principles set out in the Convention, and the necessity for fulfilling the mandate of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, call on all States Parties to refrain from proposing any action that does not fall in the scope of the mandate of the OPCW, and does not polarise or politicise its work, in order not to create a precedence that would undermine the future work of the Organisation. Thanks.