

## PAKISTAN

### STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SHUJJAT ALI RATHORE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES

Mr. Chairperson,

Please allow me, at the outset, to convey my warm felicitations to you, on your election as Chairperson of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Conference of the States Parties. I am confident that with your vast multilateral expertise, you will be able to guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. I would like to reassure you of the support and cooperation of my delegation. I would also like to pay tribute to the outgoing Chairperson, **Ambassador Christoph Israng** of Germany, for leading the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the State Parties in a most effective and admirable manner and whose experience and skill have been invaluable to us throughout this past year. We would also like to congratulate the newly elected Bureau members and other officers, including from our own regional group, who have been entrusted with great responsibility and wish them success. May I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General, **Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü**, for his comprehensive and detailed report on the on-going and planned activities of his Organization and to commend him for the great leadership he provided over the last seven years to this organization. He guided OPCW through some turbulent times with steadfastness, sagacity, courage and timely decision-making. I would also like to applaud all the candidates for the post of Director General OPCW, who with their dignified demeanor and honourable campaigns made the task of the Executive Council easier to recommend a new leader for this august body. I would specially congratulate **Ambassador Fernando Arias** for running a successful campaign. I believe that in **Ambassador Arias** we have found a good leader, who will prove to be a worthy



successor to Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü. Let me also appreciate the Chairperson of the Executive Council, **Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal** for very ably conducting the elections of the Director General.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While Pakistan fully associates with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China by Ambassador H.E. Ms Haifa Aissami Madah, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW, I would like to share Pakistan's views on some of the issues that we believe are critical for this organization's future and require our close and serious attention.

Pakistan is deeply concerned over the latest findings of the Fact-Finding Mission reports that once again indicate the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. Pakistan remains strongly opposed to the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any circumstances. We fully subscribe to the OPCW commitment to ensure that no one has to suffer because of the use of chemical weapons. However, it is imperative that the mechanism to investigate allegations of use of chemical weapons are not politicized or used for political agenda and that the investigations should be fair and transparent to affix responsibility and to prevent use of chemical weapons in future. We, therefore, urge the stakeholders to reach out to each other to achieve a consensus on the composition and mandate of the JIM/FFM to give credence to its works in the future.

Pakistan appreciates the efforts of the state parties with regards to the destruction of their chemical weapons. We especially commend the efforts of the Russian Federation and OPCW for completion of operations at the Kizner Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility last September. The destruction of Russia's last declared chemical weapons was truly a historic event.



Pakistan welcomes the progress made by States Parties in the implementation of their Article VII (**National Implementation Measures**) obligations. Pakistan, too is fully aware of its responsibilities under this article. This year, to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CWC and OPCW, Pakistan organized a series of events including an *Advanced Chemical Safety Management Symposium* held on 7-8 March 2017 and an event on '*Comprehensive Chemical Safety and Security: Best Practices for Pakistani Chemical Industry*' on 9-10 May 2017, in Islamabad. I am pleased to report to you that in July this year, the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA) signed the Responsible Care Declaration of International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA). Just recently, the emergency response and protection capabilities of nine States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) received a substantial boost as a new cluster of first responders wrapped up training at the 7<sup>th</sup> International Advanced Course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, held in Islamabad, Pakistan from 13-17 November 2017. In January 2018, Pakistan is again going to hold a symposium on the safety and security.

Similarly, in the context of Article X (**Assistance and Protection Against Chemical Weapons**) on Assistance and Protection, we welcome the substantive contribution that the OPCW has made as reflected in the Report on Article X by the Director-General.

We also need to pay greater attention to the implementation of Article XI (**Economic & Technological Development**) on economic and technological development by ensuring promotion of international cooperation for the benefit of mankind through non-discriminatory transfer of technology, material and equipment for the peaceful use of chemistry.

Pakistan deeply appreciates the report of the Director General on the Status of Implementation of the international Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons. We commend all the donors, who have generously donated to the Trust Fund.



The deliberations in the **Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Terrorism** and its **Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors** underline the recognition that terrorism involving chemical weapons or toxic materials will continue to occupy our attention. We will continue to support the Secretariat's efforts and programmes that are meant for information sharing, coordination, and capacity-building of the States Parties against this menace.

We appreciate the work of the Co-Chairpersons of the **Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities** of the OPCW. The on-going deliberations are important from the perspective of the approaching 4<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention next year. The 4<sup>th</sup> Review Conference will provide a critical opportunity to utilize the outcome of these deliberations and to provide a clear road map for the future. The essence of all previous Review Conferences and related activities is to ensure that the permanent prohibition on Chemical Weapons represented by the Convention continues to be adhered and attract strong international support.

Pakistan supports the vision to which the Organization aspires by the year 2025 i.e to be *“the premier international organization working for a world free of chemical weapons, with a focus on preventing their re-emergence, by implementing all provisions of the Convention in an effective, efficient, and non-discriminatory manner.”* Pakistan believes that only by bringing universality to its mandate and by embracing science and technology can OPCW remain an effective organization in times to come. As an active participant in the creation of the Convention and in the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Pakistan envisages achieving a world free from the threat of chemical weapons', whereby the mankind receives the fruits of peaceful use of chemical industry, thus propelling us into a new age of cooperation, making our economies thrive and our planet safe from the harmful use of chemical agents.





In conclusion, I would once again like to reaffirm Pakistan's unwavering support for the core objectives of the Convention and our continued active and constructive participation in OPCW's activities.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Twenty Second Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

