

**STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR NGO THI HOA, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO
THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL
WEAPONS (OPCW) AT THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE STATE PARTIES**

(27 November-1 December 2017)

Mr Chairperson,

Mr. Director-General,

And Distinguished Delegates,

Let me take this opportunity to join other delegations in congratulating you, Ambassador Abdelouahab Bellouki on your election as the Chairperson of the 22nd session of Conference of State Parties. Allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Christoph Israng of Germany for his dedicated leadership during the previous session of CSP. We also wish to commend the excellent efforts of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) towards the common goal of a world free of chemical weapons. We congratulate Ambassador Fernando Arias of Spain on being nominated as the new OPCW Director-General.

We would also like to associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of NAM State Parties to the CWC and China.

Mr Chairperson,

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the OPCW, my Delegation takes positive note of the remarkable progress that OPCW and Member States have achieved over the past two decades. The current State Parties to the CWC represent about 98% of both the world's population and the world-wide chemical industry, which firmly verifies this Convention as the most successful multilateral and universal instrument in disarmament and non-proliferation fora. We also acknowledge other positive developments, including the full destruction of the Chemical Weapons Stockpile possessed by the Russian Federation under OPCW Verification, the destruction of Libya's remaining Category II chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya, the cooperation between the OPCW and the Syria Arab Republic to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons, as well as the successful conduct of capacity-building, educational activities and programmes organized by the OPCW and many Member States.

However, there remain a lot of challenges ahead of us. The daunting risks of chemical weapons require more concerted efforts of Member States to eliminate the threat of chemical weapons across the globe and achieve the full objective of the Convention. In this regard, we look forward to fruitful discussions within the framework of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and the Sub-Working

Group on Non-State Actors, respectively chaired by the Ambassadors of Senegal and Chile, and the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities, co-chaired by the Ambassadors of Canada and South Africa, to formulate concrete and substantive documents to be considered at the Fourth Review Conference next year.

Mr Chairperson,

Viet Nam persistently pursues its long-standing principle to support general and complete disarmament, including the prohibition and elimination of mass destruction weapons. Given the importance of integrity and full compliance to the CWC, we urge the remaining States that are not Parties to the Convention to consider acceding to the Convention at the earliest. We call for the strengthened cooperation between OPCW and other international organizations and countries to effectively combat the risk of toxic chemicals falling in the hands of non-state actors, including terrorists.

It is also needed to support and facilitate the active role of OPCW, as a forum to exchange ideas and practices amongst Member States regarding the peaceful uses of chemical substances, as well as a major source of assistance and technical support to help State Parties strengthen their national capacities. In this regard, we welcome the initiative of Mr. Director-General to engage with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) about the possibility of establishing an ASEAN Center on Chemical-Biological Threats.

We continue to underline that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances should be condemned and perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks should be brought to justice. Viet Nam concerns about the use of chemical weapons in Syria and requests more cooperation between Syria and the OPCW to resolve the remaining issues. We support the efforts to be undertaken by the OPCW and the United Nations to carry out investigations in an impartial, objective, professional and complete manner. For its part, Viet Nam stands ready to work harder with all stakeholders towards the effective implementation of all provisions of the CWC and looks forward to the continued cooperation of all Member States.

Finally, we request that this Statement be circulated as an official document of the Conference and posted on OPCW's public website.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.