



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Second Session
27 November – 1 December 2017

C-22/NAT.16
27 November 2017
ENGLISH only

MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AHMAD NAZRI YUSOF
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Thank you Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

This year, the OPCW celebrates the 20th Anniversary of its establishment, which also marks the twentieth year since the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force. We are pleased to note that since its inception, the OPCW had made many landmark decisions that resulted in 96% of chemical weapon stockpiles declared by possessor States being successfully destroyed.

However, work is not yet done for OPCW and at no point will it rest on its laurels with this remarkable achievement. The demand and expectation for OPCW to play its role remains significant and important, not only to eliminate the remaining stockpiles but more so, to deal with the emergence of new threats, including those from the non-State actors. Hence, dynamic leadership and unequivocal commitment and cooperation by all States Parties are prerequisites.

This short prologue may not suffice to summarise all the achievements of this august organization, what matters the most is, its valuable contributions to promote peace and security around the globe and humanity that warrants for recognition and praise by all State Parties. Malaysia wishes to take this opportunity to express our utmost appreciation to His Excellency Ahmed Üzümcü, Director-General of the OPCW for his leadership and excellent contribution and the Technical Secretariat for the commitment and dedication towards achieving this significant success.

Malaysia aligns itself to the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of Non-Aligned Movement CWC State Parties and China.

Malaysia stands together with other States Parties in congratulating Ambassador Mr Abdelouahab Bellouki of Morocco on his appointment as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Malaysia also wishes to express its appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Dr Christoph Israng of Germany for



his outstanding stewardship throughout the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

My delegation would also like to congratulate Ambassador Fernando Arias of Spain on his unanimous nomination to assume the responsibility as the new Director-General of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

Malaysia follows the developments of the chemical weapons issue in the Syrian Arab Republic with great interest and responsibility. Malaysia appreciates the efforts carried out by the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria (FFM) in establishing facts of allegations levelled against Syria and the conclusion of the Seventh Report of the OPCW- United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). These are important steps for us to move forward.

However, following the reports and the subsequent related decision of the Executive Council, the issue had again polarised States Parties in finding workable solution. Prolonging deliberation on this issue would amount to a futile exercise, unless all provisions under the Convention are fully adhered to by all States Parties.

While at times the subject precipitates interesting intellectual discourse among States Parties, however, it has been dragging on for far too long, at the expense of precious time, resources and perseverance of the Organisation. To this end, it is imperative that all States Parties stand united in upholding the principles set out by the Convention to resolve this challenge.

My delegation believes that every decision and action taken must be done within the strict compliance of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention to avoid such decisions and actions from being tainted by unnecessary malign criticisms. Uncertainties and reservations should not be conceived when arriving at any conclusions, instead, conclusions should be based on comprehensive, inclusive, accurate and precise evidences and facts. We strongly believe with sufficient political will consensus can be forged even in the midst of intractable conflict.

In this regard, we call upon all concerned parties to exercise flexibility, understanding and adaptability in their considerations. As an august and respected technical organisation in the area of chemical weapons disarmament and non-proliferation, it is vital to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions under the Convention are adhered to.

Malaysia reiterates its condemnation on the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances, and that the perpetrators must be held accountable. Prohibition on the use of chemical weapons should not only be limited to international conflict situations.

The incident involving the use of chemical weapon Schedule 1, VX nerve agent at Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 which resulted in the death of one North Korean national in February 2017, is a case in point. In relation to this, I wish to inform that the trial of the case is still ongoing. The Government of Malaysia is committed to resolve and seek closure to this unfortunate incident. Malaysia will further update the OPCW and the Executive Council on this matter once the legal process is completed.

My delegation also wishes to emphasise our concern over the growing threat of the use of chemical weapons posed by non-State actors. The threat from these actors is becoming much more complex and overwhelming. In light of the Open-ended Working Group on Future Priorities and the Fourth Review Conference expected to be held in 2018, we support the effort of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors to address the threat of non-State actors in a more concrete and workable term that is common to all States Parties. Greater understanding of regional issues, more tailored assistance and capacity building programmes are essential towards achieving these objectives.

We also commend the efforts by the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities of OPCW to come up with “a holistic, coherent, forward-looking and action-oriented document” for the consideration of the Fourth Review Conference in 2018.

For the OPCW to remain relevant to face future challenges, it has to stand ready to switch its focus from “disarmament” to “non-proliferation”. In this respect, the Organisation must be ready and capable to adapt to the rapidly changing environment and the increasingly complex and demanding nature of chemical weapons issues, far beyond the Syrian case. Therefore, its human resources should be stretched beyond current capabilities, to include the specialised knowledge, expertise and skills to facilitate the Organisation in confronting new challenges and preparing for its future contingencies.

Universality is yet another issue that is likely to remain on the agenda. With the remaining States showing no inclination of being States Parties any time soon, efforts must be enhanced towards fulfilling this objective as universal ratification of the Convention is fundamental in ensuring its effective implementation.

I thank you for your attention, and request that this statement be included as an official document of this meeting and be posted on the website.

Thank you.

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