



**STATEMENT BY
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OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT
THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AND CHINA
AT THE THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES
TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
THE HAGUE, THE 8-19 APRIL 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Members of the Non-Aligned Movement who are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China (the NAM CWC States Parties and China), I would like to welcome you as Chairman of the Third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We express our confidence that given your vast experience and expertise, you will be able to steer the deliberations of the Third Review Conference to a successful conclusion.

I wish to thank the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr. Ahmet Uzumcu, for the presentation of his comprehensive report. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the preparation of the Third Review Conference, H.E. Nassima Bagli, Ambassador of Algeria, for her dedicated efforts for preparation of the draft report document of the Third Review Conference.

The Islamic Republic of Iran assumed the Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement at its 16th Summit, which took place in Tehran, in September 2012. At that special occasion, under the section "Disarmament and International Security" of Chapter I of the Final Document of the 16th Summit, the Heads of States or Governments of the NAM adopted in its paragraphs 201-204 clear languages in relation to the CWC which I would like to quote as follows:

- Expressing their serious concerns that the final extended deadline for the destruction of chemical weapons has not been met by certain possessor States Parties and urging them to take every necessary measures with a view to ensuring their compliance with the Convention;
- Full implementation of the Convention to contribute to the international and regional peace and security;
- Importance of universality of the CWC and accession of all states not parties to the Convention;
- Encouraging all States Parties to engage with the Technical Secretariat of the Organization on the steps that need to be undertaken for the national implementation of the CWC;
- Promotion of International Cooperation and removal of any discriminatory restrictions in this field that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention;
- Stressing the importance of the implementation of Article X of the CWC and welcoming establishment of the International Support Network for the Victims of Chemical Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that the purpose of the Third Review Conference is to review the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We firmly believe that the review process should uphold the Convention in its entirety and reiterate the commitment of all States Parties to the effective and balanced implementation of all its provisions. The review process should in no way lead to a change in the focus of the Convention.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. The NAM CWC States Parties and China therefore call for the general and complete disarmament under strict and effective verification regime, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in line with the first preambular paragraph of the Convention.

As a unique multilateral disarmament instrument that provides for comprehensive and verifiable prohibition of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, the Chemical Weapons Convention continues to play an important role in the enhancement of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China call for the total destruction of all categories of chemical weapons by the possessor States Parties. We note the significant advances by some possessor States Parties in the destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles since the Second Review Conference. In this regard, we welcome the destruction of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles of India and a State Party.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China remain seriously concerned that based on the Director General's reports at the Sixty Eighth Session of the Executive Council as well as destruction plans submitted by the possessor States Parties, they have not met the final extended deadline, since the destruction process will not conclude until September 2023, according to the aforementioned plans. In this context, we firmly believe that it is imperative for the major possessor States Parties to ensure compliance with their obligations and the relevant decisions approved by the Policy Making Organs and to accelerate the destruction of their remaining chemical weapons stockpiles in order to uphold the credibility and integrity of the Convention. Since the total destruction of chemical weapons has not yet materialized, the issue of destruction should be the primary focus of the Third Review Conference. It is important that the Third Review Conference call upon the major possessor States to take every necessary measure to ensure the completion of destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles in the shortest time possible.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm the importance of the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons for the full realization of the object and purpose of the Convention, and call upon abandoning States Parties to make the fullest possible efforts to complete destruction in the shortest time possible, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the relevant decisions of the Executive Council.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China recall and welcome the Council's decision, EC-67/DEC.8 dated 17 February 2012 regarding modification of a decision relating to the concerned States Party's obligation to destroy all its declared old chemical weapons in accordance with the Convention. We further call upon all the other States Parties that possess old chemical weapons to also complete their destruction of these chemical weapons in the shortest time possible.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the universality of the Convention is fundamental to the achievement of its object and purpose and to the enhancement of international peace and security. We welcome the accession of 5 new States Parties, namely Guinea Bissau, Lebanon, Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Iraq since the Second Review Conference. We express concern about the fact that there remains a total of 8 States not Party to the Convention, including 2 signatory States and 6 non-signatory States. It is important that the Third Review Conference call upon all States not Party to join the Convention without further delay and precondition, particularly those whose non-adherence to the Convention is a cause for serious concern and request the Technical Secretariat and those States Parties in a position to do so, to continue to intensify their efforts with a view to achieving full universality at the earliest possible date.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China call on States Parties to fully implement the decision of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties on universality, which emphasizes that States that remain outside the Convention, would not be able to take advantage of any of the benefits it offers to States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China acknowledge that considerable progress has been made in the implementation of Article VII since the adoption of the action plan regarding the implementation of Article VII obligations. While we note with appreciation the increase in the number of States Parties that are in the process of adopting the necessary measures, we also acknowledge the various challenges confronted by developing States Parties in this regard.

We reaffirm that the effective contribution of the Convention to international and regional peace and security can be enhanced through its full implementation, and in this context also encouraged all States Parties that have not yet done so to engage with the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on the steps that need to be undertaken for the national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We stress that the provision of all possible assistance and technical support to States Parties, at their request, is the best way to effectively realize the objectives of the action plan, taking into account the distinctive character of the States Parties' legislative processes in the context of the implementation of Article VII. We also consider that the Technical Secretariat should continue making efforts to assist the States Parties to overcome, amongst others, the practical difficulties and resource constraints encountered by them in the implementation of the action plan.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that national legislation should be in line with the provisions of the Convention and as comprehensive as possible to monitor the chemical activities in a way that provisions of the Convention are implemented and obligations of the Member States are met.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties 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 on a regular basis, to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to respond positively to the increasing demand of States Parties for assistance, particularly to the victims of chemical weapons. In line with the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its 16th Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 02-12-2011), we

reiterate our call upon the Technical Secretariat to move expeditiously to establish and start up the International Support Network and encourage the States Parties to contribute to its established voluntary trust fund.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China express their deep concern that chemical weapons may have been used in the Syrian Arab Republic. We underline that the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances would be reprehensible and completely contrary to the legal norms and standards of the international community. We also express our unequivocal support of the investigation that has been initiated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the support of the OPCW. The NAM CWC States Parties and China also request the Director General to keep the Executive Council informed of the actions that the Technical Secretariat is undertaking and any further development in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is essential for the realization of the object and purpose of the Convention. We are of the view that the decision taken by the Conference of the States Parties at its 16th Session (C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011) on “Components of an Agreed Framework for the Full Implementation of Article XI” constitutes an important step towards the full implementation of this article. We request the continuation of the facilitation process in order to implement that decision, and to consider new proposals submitted by delegations in order to take additional necessary measures to ensure full implementation of Article XI.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China express their firm conviction that a plan of action is the best tool to ensure the full implementation of Article XI as a fundamental pillar of the Convention. In this regard, a Working Paper was presented to the Third Review Conference by the NAM CWC States Parties and China entitled “Proposal for a Plan of Action on the Full Implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention” which is attached to this statement.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress the obligation of States Parties to implement the Convention in a manner that avoids hampering the economic or technological development of States Parties and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.

We strongly believe that it is imperative to ensure the removal of and to avoid the imposition of any restrictions that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. In this context, we call upon the developed countries to fulfil their commitment to transfer technology, material, and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field and to remove any discriminatory restrictions, such as unilateral sanctions against other States Parties, which affect the Convention’s long-term viability and have an adverse impact on the trust existing among States Parties.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China consider that the international cooperation programs of the OPCW should foster economic and technological development through international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, and should, in particular, contribute to the development of States Parties’ capacities to implement the Convention.

We highlight the increase in the membership of the Organisation and the increase in demand of international cooperation and assistance programmes for capacity building that is not being met

due to resource constraints. In this regard, the NAM CWC States Parties and China call for a steady increase, on an annual basis, of funding for the OPCW's international cooperation and assistance programmes through the regular budget to meet the ever increasing demand. We also express our full support to the OPCW Programme for Africa and encourage the Technical Secretariat to expedite the pace of its implementation.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the view that any concept or approach related to the implementation of other provisions of the Convention shall not undermine provisions of Article XI.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China consider that the verification regime of the OPCW meets the requirements of the Convention and plays an important role for the credibility of the implementation of all provisions of the Convention, as well as providing a reliable instrument to ensure that States Parties are complying with their obligations under the Convention. We acknowledge that steady progress has been made towards increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the verification system.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm the importance of assuring that the verification provisions of the Convention continue being implemented in a manner that avoids hampering the economic or technological development of the States Parties and also shall avoid undue intrusion into the chemical activities of States Parties for purposes not prohibited under the Convention and, in particular, shall abide by the provisions set forth in the Annex on the Protection of Confidential Information. We reiterate that declarations provided by the States Parties are the cornerstone of the verification regime of the CWC and the only source of information for verification of chemical activities of the States Parties, as set forth in the Convention.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the verification regime under Article VI must correspond to the hierarchy of risks inherent in the respective category of chemicals, and we underscore the need to uphold the principle that establishes that facilities posing most risk to the object and purpose of the Convention retain the central attention of the verification measures.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China note with satisfaction that no case of non compliance has been reported up to now, and that no challenge inspections have been requested. A challenge inspection is an instrument to be used as a last resort and under exceptional circumstances. We are of the firm conviction that the consultation and clarification procedure is an integral part of Article IX, which shall precede any request for a challenge inspection. Any abuse of this provision would jeopardize the trust among States Parties and would be contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention and shall be penalized.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the view that resolving relevant outstanding issues is an essential part of the preparedness of the Organisation to conduct a challenge inspection. Therefore, the Third Review Conference should request the Policy-Making Organs to expedite their efforts with a view to resolve those outstanding issues at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Chairman,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the issues related to the future development of the Organisation, and in this regard we stress that any decision on this matter should be decided upon by the Policy Making Organs (PMO) of the Organisation. In our view, States Parties, through the PMOs, need to find an appropriate and agreed upon forum to

facilitate consideration of the issues in a thorough, transparent and holistic manner aimed at reaching consensus. In this context, we further stress that the complete destruction of all categories of chemical weapons and their verification shall continue to be the top priority of the Organization.

The practice of consensus decision-making by the Policy-Making Organs shall continue to be crucial in achieving our common goals, as well as in preserving the integrity of the Convention. Thus, the NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the view that the Third Review Conference should reaffirm that the Policy-Making Organs continue to make their decisions based on this very important principle.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China further recall that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat should be fair and transparent, paying due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide as possible geographical basis, particularly at the professional level.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the NAM CWC States Parties and China are fully committed to their obligations under the Convention. We look forward to the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in the shortest time possible.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China would like to give you the assurance of their fullest cooperation in ensuring the success of this Third Review Conference. I would also request you this Statement and its attachment to be treated as an official document of the Third Review Conference.

Thank you