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MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR FAUZIAH MOHAMAD TAIB
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

1. My congratulations to you for coming this far in your effort to lead this Council. Sometimes, in multilateral meetings what we say and what we mean are two distinct and separate things. But in your case, Mr Chairperson, my delegation stands by what we have said earlier—that there are very few Chairs that we look up to. We remain impressed by your skills, your tenacity to get things done, and your stewardship in leading us through the challenging moments, particularly on the issue of the final extended deadline on the destruction of the remaining stockpiles of chemical weapons. Your chairmanship remains the yardstick by which we should measure our work. South Africa should be proud to have a diplomat of your standing.
2. My delegation welcomes the opening remarks of the Director-General. We look forward to hearing more from him when he reports on the destruction/deadline related issues.
3. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, my delegation subscribes to the views expressed by Her Excellency Ambassador Zelmys of Cuba as Chairperson of NAM and takes this opportunity to thank her for her tireless effort in putting our views forward thus far.
4. April 29, 2012 came and went. In The Hague, the tulips bloomed during what could be called another kind of silent spring. Yet, 29 April was never meant to be a momentous day because we knew that even if the possessor States could destroy their stockpiles by then, there remain those outside the Convention regime that are not destroying theirs. My delegation feels that what lies beyond our control is far more dangerous than what lies within. And while we talk endlessly about the importance of universality, we could not move an inch to bring in the other few that matter most. That is why my delegation insists that the destruction of chemical weapons, wherever they are, must still be the priority of this Organisation.
5. Declaration, verification, and inspections are merely means to an end. Our priority should be to keep pushing for the total destruction and elimination of chemical weapons and to ensure that no new weapons emerge, or the existing ones, transferred.



At some crucial point, we also have to come to an agreement to throw out of the window of our Organisation, the misleading term of ‘non-proliferation’ because this term simply does not do justice to what we are trying to achieve. Our subject matter is simply one of those issues, like honesty—we either are, or we are not. We cannot be only a little bit, or periodically.

6. If some State Parties have their way, this could possibly be the last time I am allowed to speak at this general debate. While the Technical Secretariat is making efforts to look into the issue of education and outreach, some of us in this room can no longer bear to hear the repeated mention of the subject under discussion. But reaching out, no matter to the converted or to the public at large about the danger of chemical weapons should constitute an important aspect of our work. Every session, I look forward to hearing what is not being said. Every session, I sift through the statements and see patterns emerging. This is important for my delegation. How else are we to determine if a particular stance has changed, or a modification in policy made?
7. Creativity is always the oil by which multilateralism thrives. If the subject has become too dry to some, it is time that we approach the subject in a different light. Maybe award-winning authors like John McPhee or Simon Winchester can be persuaded to write a biography of chemical weapons so that it will become a subject fascinating enough to know and in a language engaging enough to read. We need to ‘sell’ the subject to a whole new generation of young persons, to make it attractive enough for them to want to embrace. Oscar Wilde once said, “the only thing worse than being talked about, is not being talked about”, and I agree with him.
8. In the next few days, this Council will make a decision on the establishment of an open-ended working group that will take on the non-envious task of preparing the documents of the Third Review Conference. My delegation hopes to be a productive part of this process. We wish not to be sidelined by any new or parallel group created by and for the very few—as was the case during the previous Review Conference. Inclusivity, transparency and engagement have always been our cornerstone, and it has withstood the test of time. There is no need to reinvent a wheel, which was never broken.
9. The OEWG of the Second Review conference held 34 meetings, and the Committee of the Whole worked almost every day until dawn. And even though there is a Chinese saying that the longer the night, the more dreams you will have, in our case, the longer the night hours we spend on the document, the more nightmares we will have. We need to stop burning the midnight oil for a few split hairs here and there.
10. Malaysia looks forward to the visit of the Director-General of the OPCW to Kuala Lumpur, which will take place next week. A full programme has been prepared for his visit that we hope will be mutually productive to both sides. The Director-General’s visit will coincide with the Regional Seminar on Chemical Safety Management which will take place on 8 to 11 May 2012, to be conducted in collaboration with the government of Japan and the OPCW. It is also my fervent hope that the Director-General will put aside some time during his visit to see the country and meet its people, for Malaysia is truly Asia.

Mr Chairperson,

11. Many personalities colour this Organisation of ours. In our line of work, diplomats come and go. I would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to my colleague, Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco Tonda of Mexico. He has been a productive contributor to the works of this session of the Council and the many sessions before this. We will miss his presence, and I wish him well for the future.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson. May I request this statement be circulated as an official document of this Executive Council.

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