



OPCW

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KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

**STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
AT THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,
Excellency, the Director-General of the OPCW,
Excellencies, heads of delegations,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to H.E. Olexander Horin, Ambassador of Ukraine, and its full confidence in his ability to steer the work of this session in a successful and able manner. My delegation also expresses its appreciation to H.E. Odette Melono, Ambassador of Cameroon, for chairing our deliberations. This delegation also associates itself with the statement made this morning on behalf of the States Parties that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.

In line with my country's policy aiming at the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction under a strict and effective international control in accordance with the first paragraph of the preamble to the Convention, allow me to reiterate my delegation's emphasis on the importance of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. My country's commitment to the Convention, and its interest in its implementation at the national and international levels, reflects its policy aiming at effectively contributing to efforts made for the prohibition and non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, since the existence of such weapons poses a threat to international peace and security. My country has paid careful attention to efforts for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction at the regional level, with a view to making the Middle East a zone free of these lethal weapons. My country has called upon the international community on several occasions to provide the necessary support for achieving this objective, which is a legitimate right of peoples of the region, and will be a major support for its security and stability. In this respect, my delegation cannot but express once again its regret at the deferral of the international conference for making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which was scheduled to be held in Helsinki. We have been, and are still, attaching great importance to convening this conference in order to advance the peace process and promote security and stability in the Middle East. We hope that concerted international efforts will enable this conference to be convened, with the participation of all countries concerned, as it will be a constructive and necessary step toward achieving security and stability in the Middle East.

My delegation believes with all certainty that the non-completion of the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles is a source of concern for all. Completion by possessor States of the destruction of their stockpiles of these weapons is one of the main objectives of the



Convention, which aims at strengthening international peace and security. We hope that the possessor States concerned will fulfil their obligations as early as possible, in accordance with the measures set forth in the decision of the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session. We renew our call for States still possessing chemical weapons to intensify their efforts to dispose of these within the deadlines already specified, and in line with the decisions of the Executive Council of the OPCW.

The use of chemical weapons, under any circumstances, cannot be tolerated. It is reprehensible and must be denounced and condemned in the strongest terms, for it violates the ethical and legal standards across the international community. On more than one occasion, and also in the statement made by this delegation at the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Executive Council, my country has expressed its deep outrage and strong condemnation of the recent developments in the Syrian Arab Republic, namely the use of these internationally prohibited weapons, which killed hundreds of innocent people. We were deeply saddened by the reluctance of the international community to assume its responsibilities and take the necessary action to stop the fierce killing machine of the Syrian regime, which claimed the lives of more than one hundred thousand Syrians. We were astonished that the international community barely moved until internationally prohibited toxic gases had been used in some regions in the Syrian Arab Republic, following which the Syrian regime has been accused of crimes against humanity. We were hoping that the latest international action would lead to a firm international response that would deter this regime from perpetrating yet further crimes, and address the Syrian issue from a holistic perspective not limited to chemical weapons. In this context, the Syrian regime must be aware that its accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention entails legal obligations which, we emphasise, need to be met and complied with.

My delegation is fully aware of the technical nature of the work of the Technical Secretariat, as well as the limits of its mandate and the tasks and responsibilities assigned to it. We appreciate the huge efforts that the Organisation is making in Syria, and in particular those of the group of experts who are working in the field, in difficult and dangerous conditions. In this respect, my delegation has taken note of the statement made by H.E. the Director-General of the Organisation, following the return of the team of experts of the Technical Secretariat, which visited the Syrian Arab Republic recently, and we support the efforts being made for a speedy assessment of the information provided by the Syrian regime on its chemical weapons arsenal, pending its formal submission of its initial declaration to the Organisation on 27 October, pursuant to the provisions of the Executive Council decision.

It is known that the Convention puts an emphasis on economic and technological development and on international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited thereunder. While we appreciate past efforts in this respect, we are of the view that further efforts need to be made urgently to achieve the requirements of Article XI of the Convention, particularly with regard to transfer of technology, equipment and expertise related to chemical industries not prohibited under the Convention to developing countries, and removing barriers put up by many industrially developed countries in this respect. This will help strengthen international economic development and bring about benefits for all parties, especially under the global economic crisis. Tackling this crisis and mitigating its impact, especially on developing countries, requires, without doubt, that international cooperation be promoted in different areas.

Madam Chairperson, distinguished colleagues,

My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü, and his team, for the great efforts they are making under the extraordinary circumstances that the Organisation is going through. In this connection, my delegation wishes to express its support for the re-appointment of Mr Ahmet Üzümcü, as the Director-General of the Organisation, for a further four-year term.

Finally, I wish that this statement be circulated as one of the official documents of the Seventy-Fourth Session of the Council.

I thank you for your good attention.

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