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CUBA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. FERMÍN QUIÑONES SÁNCHEZ
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
REGARDING THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION
OF ARTICLE XI OF THE CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,

The delegation of Cuba welcomes Ms Abeer Khalefah of Iraq and the work she has done as a facilitator of the discussions on Article XI, and we appreciate the useful report submitted for this session.

We welcome the efforts of the Technical Secretariat toward achieving full implementation of Article XI of the Convention, in spite of existing complexities related to insufficient human and financial resources.

After 17 years, we have not seen the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of this pillar of the Convention; it is still an unresolved task facing our Organisation. Cuba continues to insist that this process must be integral and must be undertaken in a deliberate and comprehensive manner.

The programmes that contribute to the enhancement of the exchange of knowledge and capacity building are very important; my government continues to support them and participate in them. These programmes should respond to the needs of the States Parties, and the real impact they make on economic and technological development should be evaluated in the most effective way possible.

Article XI clearly states that the acquisition and transfer of chemicals, equipment, and technologies for non-prohibited use must be facilitated. Regrettably, this provision has not received due attention. In short, we must address the future of the OPCW, a process in which international cooperation should occupy the place that it deserves.

Many States Parties to the Convention lack modern laboratories or the equipment needed to develop their chemical industry for peaceful purposes. As a result, the knowledge and experience gained through cooperative courses, workshops, and programmes promoted by the OPCW cannot, in many cases, be brought to fruition or serve the function of economic and technological development.



All States Parties, without exception, have the legitimate right to participate in the broadest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment, and information in the field of chemistry for purposes that are not prohibited by the Convention. At the same time, we are all obliged to facilitate this exchange.

My delegation thus cannot understand why some States impose unilateral measures making the free exchange among States Parties in this field impossible.

Even when the Governments of Cuba and the United States officially re-establish diplomatic relations on 20 July, the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed against the Cuban people for more than five decades will remain intact; this constitutes a violation of the Chemical Weapon Convention, and of Article XI in particular.

We call once more for the end of this failed policy, which continues to constrain the development of my country's chemical industry and rules out our access to chemical technologies and products that are critical for our development.

We welcome the official consultations that took place at the start of this month, and at which the delegations of the Non-Aligned Movement and China and other delegations presented specific proposals to begin discussions on a document that would guarantee the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI. We felt the constructive environment—which we are calling to preserve—at these consultations.

The adoption of an action plan containing specific measures that will benefit less developed States Parties and that will allow for adequate monitoring of the implementation of this article, as is done with other articles of the Convention, will continue to be a priority for my delegation.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session.

Thank you.