



Statement by
Ambassador J.S. Mukul,
Permanent Representative of India to the OPCW
at the 80th Session of the Executive Council,
6-9 October 2015.

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director General,
Distinguished Delegates

First of all, I take this opportunity to welcome you back as Chair. We are confident that under your dynamic leadership this session will have a successful conclusion.

I would like to thank the Director General for his comprehensive and useful statement and wish to commend him and the Technical Secretariat for the good work being done by them.

My delegation would also like to welcome Myanmar as the 191st Member of the Chemical Weapons Convention and congratulates Angola for depositing its instrument of accession to the Convention. We urge the remaining States that are not Parties to the Convention to consider ratifying or acceding to the Convention at the earliest.

My delegation also endorses and associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of NAM States Parties to the CWC and China.

Mr. Chairman,

India views the Chemical Weapons Convention as a unique, non-discriminatory disarmament instrument which serves as a model for the

elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. In a short span of eighteen years, CWC has been remarkably successful in attaining near universality. India attaches great importance to its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation. All chemical weapons must be destroyed. Destruction of chemical weapons is the most important undertaking made by every State Party to the Convention. We urge all possessor States to take necessary steps to expedite their destruction processes.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has followed with interest the progress made so far in the matter of destruction of Syria's Chemical Weapons Production Facilities. We hope that this would be completed by the earliest possible time. We have also taken note of the recent report of the Declaration Assessment Team. It is our expectation that the Declaration Assessment team will receive full cooperation from the Syrian Arab Republic and all the unresolved issues would be resolved amicably in the spirit of trust and co-operation.

My delegation has closely followed the work done by the two Fact-Finding Missions (FFMs) in Syria and we understand that both the Missions are working on finalisation of their reports.

Mr. Chairman,

It has been our consistent position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anybody under any circumstances cannot be justified and the perpetrators of such abhorrent acts must be held accountable. In this regard, we have noted the establishment of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). My delegation expects that the JIM will carry out its mandate in an objective and professional manner.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the core commitments pledged by each Member State to the Convention is to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry. Chemistry and chemical technologies hold the key to confront many of the daunting challenges of the present day – be it boosting food production, fighting epidemics, mitigating climate change and so on. Article XI underscores the role of the CWC in promoting integrated chemicals management, enhancing technical

skills, encouraging development and diffusion of technologies across the world. The entire world looks up to the OPCW to launch capacity-building activities for development of skills, promotion of chemical education and outreach activities with scientific education and research institutions. In this regard, we commend the role of the Technical Secretariat in formulating new initiatives under International Co-operation Assistance budget in the Draft Programme and Budget 2016. It is heartening to note that an increase of 8.2 % in the budget of ICA has been achieved without increase in the assessed contribution of the State Parties. We expect that this spirit of co-operation would continue in future among Member States for achieving the overall objectives of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

While much success has been achieved in making the world freer of chemical weapons, there is no room for complacency. Emergence of non-state actors clouds the chemical disarmament landscape and poses a growing and real challenge since the potential of toxic chemicals falling in the hands of non-state actors is no longer a hypothetical scenario. In such a scenario, it is our view, Mr. Chairman, that effective national implementation provides a bulwark. My delegation is delighted to know that Paraguay has officially adopted new legislation for implementing the provisions of the Convention. We urge all Member States, which have not done so far, to give priority to the national implementation measures as contained in Article VII of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation believes that the OPCW has a pivotal role to play in prevention and management of “chemical incidents” which may happen, either by accident or by design. In either case, the response has to be effective and swift which will not be possible without being in a “state of readiness”. Prevention is better than cure. For prevention of chemical incidents, safety consciousness has to be inculcated and fostered as an essential ethic to be followed by the chemical industry and its related stakeholders.

In this regard, my delegation is glad to note that the chemical safety and security management-related workshops organised by the OPCW have been well received by the States Parties and chemical industry. For these initiatives

we commend the Technical Secretariat, especially the ICA division, and expect that this momentum would continue in the coming years.

Mr. Chairman,

While ignorance and complacency are the major impediments in chemical disarmament, the growing cult of violence seems to be the catalyst for use of chemical weapons especially by non-state actors. There is no denying that making of chemical weapons and designing their delivery requires no big investments or deep knowledge or sophisticated technology. Neither is it too difficult to source the required raw materials. It is against this background that the renewed vigilance against re-emergence of chemical weapons becomes more important while the liquidation of existing stockpile is nearing an end.

Against this backdrop, India welcomes and supports the proposal for the establishment of a permanent Advisory Board on Education and Outreach.

Mr. Chairman,

In the end, I would request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

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