



OPCW

Executive Council

Eightieth Session
6 – 8 October 2015

EC-80/NAT.15
6 October 2015
ENGLISH only

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JONGHYUN CHOE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

I would like to begin by saying that I do indeed have every confidence that under your able leadership this meeting will yield a successful outcome and by expressing my delegation's full support for your endeavours to that purpose.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Hamid Ali Rao who has assumed the post of Deputy Director-General. And I would like to express my appreciation to Director-General Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü for his valuable guiding report this morning.

My delegation would like to express once again its appreciation to the OPCW team for their devotion and hard work even in the face of dangerous conditions to make progress towards the destruction of 12 chemical weapons production facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic and the installation of monitoring equipment in them. However, the team has yet to complete its mission mainly due to the grave security situation. I call upon all parties concerned to render their full support for this important task.

I would like to commend the members of the Fact-Finding Missions on the professionalism and devotion they have demonstrated in their full efforts to ascertain the whole truth of the alleged use of toxic chemicals as chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. Furthermore, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the OPCW and United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism which is tasked with identifying any individual, or entity responsible for the alleged use of toxic chemicals as chemical weapons.

I believe that continuous close cooperation among the OPCW, the United Nations and the States Parties is crucial in ensuring that the Joint Investigative Mechanism is able to achieve its task. In this regard, the relevant skills and expertise of the OPCW should be utilised to the full. My government reiterates its complete support for the work of the Joint Investigative Mechanism and hopes for the same from the other parties concerned, including the Syrian Arab Republic.

In its 11 mission trips to the Syrian Arab Republic, the Declaration Assessment Team has had meetings and discussions with the Syrian authorities in the process of conducting site visits. I



would like to commend the team on the dedication and professionalism they have shown and express my full support for its work in the Syrian Arab Republic. The alleged gaps and inconsistencies in the Syrian declarations have been a source of concern to us. The Syrian Arab Republic has yet to provide us with a sense of confidence that its chemical weapons programme is irreversible.

In addition to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, it is with deep concern that I have noted the alleged use of chemical weapons by non-State actors in the Republic of Iraq. I look forward to close cooperation between the Secretariat and the Government of Iraq to conduct an exhaustive review of the situation with the aim of bringing those responsible to justice.

Last week, we had a Permanent Representatives' retreat where we engaged in an exchange of views on such matters as the future of the Organisation, its task of verification, capacity building and engagement. I believe that one of the core objectives of the OPCW is not only the destruction of chemical weapons but indeed the task of preventing the future re-emergence of chemical weapons. The task the OPCW faces on the path ahead is that of how to make the Organisation more effective in fulfilling its core objectives by addressing challenges in an ever-changing security environment and in the development of science and technology. It is the view of my delegation that continued discussion between the Secretariat and States Parties will be of great value in shaping effective strategies for this task.

The task of entirely prohibiting chemical weapons may be said to be a task which may never truly come to an end. We do therefore still have a great deal of work to do and we should not create any impression that the core values of the OPCW will become less relevant in the global security regime after 2023. It is rather high time for us now to frame a new chapter for the OPCW after 2023.

My delegation notes with appreciation the draft Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2016 which proposes a 3.2% reduction from the budget of 2015 with balanced distribution of financial resources among the seven programmes. To ensure the effective use of the budget, I am of the opinion that the Secretariat should introduce a mechanism for the regular checking and assessment of its activities.

My delegation also notes with concern that a significant number of States Parties are still in arrears in the payment of their assessed contribution to the OPCW and some States have yet to pay their reimbursement dues arising in connection with the verification activities.

Education and outreach activities of the Chemical Weapons Convention towards stake holders including the chemical industry, academia and civil society should be further reinforced to strengthen the Convention's role as a bulwark against chemical weapons. In this regard, I welcome the establishment of an advisory board on education and outreach. In selecting its members, due care should be taken to ensure a balance in terms of expertise, gender and geographical distribution.

A workshop for Member States of the OPCW in the Asian region on the peaceful development and use of chemistry is to be held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea from the 20 to 22 of this month. The aim of the workshop is to further promote programmes for international cooperation in the chemical industry and to enhance national capacities in the region. I am pleased to say that the Republic of Korea will continue its efforts to promote such activities.

Last month, the Republic of Angola deposited its instrument of accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention. I welcome this and urge the few remaining countries outside the Convention, including North Korea, to join the Convention as soon as possible without any preconditions. In this regard, I commend the tireless effort of the Secretariat to ensure that the Convention is truly universal. I would like to emphasise once again that universal adherence to the Convention is an utmost priority for all of us.

In closing, I would like to request that this statement be included as an official document of the Eightieth Session of the Executive Council and be published on the OPCW website and extranet. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

--- 0 ---