

**STATEMENT BY THE AFRICAN GROUP OF STATES PARTIES TO THE  
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION DELIVERED BY KENYA'S PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE, H.E. AMBASSADOR ROSE MAKENA MUCHIRI,  
TO THE EIGHTY- SECOND SESSION OF THE  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (EC-82) OF THE OPCW**

**THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS, 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016**

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**Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Participants**

I have the honour on behalf of the African States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to deliver this statement.

From the onset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Odette Melono of Cameroon, as the Chairperson of the Executive Council and wish to state that the African Group is confident of your capabilities and competences to steer the deliberations of the Eighty-Second (82<sup>nd</sup>) Session of this Executive Council (EC) to a successful conclusion. We also take this opportunity to congratulate the new vice Chairpersons to the Council.

The Group expresses gratitude to the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Uzümcü, for his comprehensive report delivered in this session and appreciates his continuous efforts and that of his team in the Technical Secretariat in further promoting the role of the Organization in the international disarmament regime. In addition, we commend all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat for the good work they continue to do to ensure that our world is free of chemical weapons and that our Organization remains an excellent example in disarmament circles.

The African Group of States Parties to the CWC associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement and China by H.E. Ambassador Alireza Jahangiri of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group of States Parties to the CWC wishes to highlight that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention will contribute greatly to international and regional peace and security. In this regard, the African Group would like to reiterate the importance of implementing all provisions of the Convention, in its entirety, by all States Parties.

We also acknowledge that the existence of weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a threat to international peace and security. Accordingly, we wish to emphasize our principled positions made in previous Conferences of States Parties and Executive Council sessions in this regard and further wish to:

- Stress the importance of upholding the credibility and maintain the integrity of the CWC as the most effective and comprehensive multilateral treaty dealing with weapons of mass destruction that currently bans an entire category of these weapons and that requires complete destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons;
- Strongly call upon all possessor States Parties of all categories of chemical weapons to strictly comply with it in order to achieve their complete destruction in the shortest time possible and in accordance with the

verification regime of the Convention and the relevant decisions of the OPCW policy-making organs (PMOs);

- Reaffirm its unequivocal condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon, anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances, as no cause could ever justify it. We also affirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable;
- Reaffirm the role of the CWC in enhancing regional and international peace and security as set out in the Convention and the importance of ensuring the universality of the Convention in accordance with the relevant decisions;
- Reiterate that universality is a prerequisite for achieving the object and purpose of the Convention, which will only be fully realized once complete universality is achieved and when there remains not even a single State not Party to it. The universality of the Convention would help not only to establish the global norm against chemical weapons, but would also provide the basis for global efforts to a world free of Chemical Weapons.
- Appreciate the efforts of the Technical Secretariat to strengthen cooperation with African States Parties to promote the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes, so as to enhance States Parties' national capacities with a view to addressing factors that hinder their development, as well as encourage progress towards the successful implementation of the CWC;
- Also appreciates the Technical Secretariat's efforts to strengthen cooperation with African States Parties through the Africa Programme.



Recognising the important contribution of the programme, the African Group calls for the continuation of the African programme towards the full and effective implementation of the Convention. This will help address factors that hinder the development of national capacities of African States Parties, with a view to furthering progress towards their successful implementation of the CWC.

- We encourage State Parties to fully implement their obligation under Article VII and recognize the importance of the implementation of national obligations. The African Group acknowledges the considerable progress achieved in the implementation of Article VII. While acknowledging that there is room for improvement in implementation, we recognize the various challenges confronted by developing States Parties in this regard. The continued flow of assistance and technical support to States Parties, including the Influential Visitors Programme, will ensure the effective realization of the objectives of Article VII and the Convention as a whole;
- We recognize the importance of the full implementation of Article X and we call on those able State Parties to continue making their contributions to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance. This will enable the OPCW to be in a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance, as well as respond positively to the increasing demands of States Parties for assistance. In this regard, the African Group appreciates States Parties, as well as the Director-General, for the contribution to the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons, in line with the decision of the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011). We further welcome the activities of the International Support Network for Victims

of Chemical Weapons and encourage States Parties to contribute to its Voluntary Trust Fund;

- The African Group is further convinced that the adoption of an action plan for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is paramount. Whilst regretting that the Review and Evaluation Workshop could not take place as per the decision of EC-81, we welcome and commend the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat and the coordinator of Working Group on Article XI, in organizing the workshop immediately before the Eighteenth (18th) Annual Meeting of National Authorities in November 2016. As this will enhance the implementation of Article XI, we believe that this requires continuous collaboration between the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group welcomes the Decision on the Destruction of Libya's remaining Chemical Weapons that was adopted during the Fifty-First Meeting of the Executive Council Meeting that was held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016. We further welcome the mandate given to the Director-General to keep both the United Nations and the African Union informed of its decisions as stipulated in the 51<sup>st</sup> Executive Council Meeting Report. We therefore, reiterate our support of Libya's urgent request to speedily remove their remaining chemical weapons stockpiles from its territory for its total destruction. We also support the work of the Organization in order to expedite the process to safely and securely remove Libya's Chemical Weapons from its territory for their total destruction. Furthermore, the African Group appreciates the support from the contributing States Parties and further support the proposal for a special fund to be established within the OPCW.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group welcomes the progress made on the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons and the significant progress made in the destruction of its chemical weapons production facilities and further welcomes the continued cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the implementation of the relevant Executive Council decisions towards the elimination of its chemical weapons. The African Group looks forward to the comprehensive destruction of the remaining weapons.

We appreciate the efforts made by the Syrian Arab Republic and further take note of the latest report of the Director General in line with the EC-81 Decision. We encourage both the Syrian Arab Republic and the OPCW to continue cooperation in line with the previous decisions made by PMOs.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group welcomes the decision made by the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties on the establishment of the an open-ended working group to discuss and formulate a document on the future priorities of the OPCW to be adopted at the Fourth Review Conference and we look forward to its establishment. We reiterate the importance of this Working Group and encourage its close cooperation with all regional groups. Similarly, the African Group reiterates its support for a panel of Chairpersons, as it's a more pragmatic and a constructive measure towards achieving a systematic and balanced outcome of this process. The African Group in this regard strongly supports the African nominee, H.E. Mr. Vusi Bruce Koloane, Permanent Representative of the South Africa, as Chairperson to the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities.



**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group commends the work of the Chairpersons of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors. We take note of the latest report presented by the chairperson of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors referring to what the OPCW can do within the frame work of the Convention to strengthen its capabilities in the field of prevention and responses. In this regard, we encourage the OPCW to continue cooperation and engagement on its work with regional intergovernmental organisations taking into account the diverse views, practises and challenges.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group reiterates the importance of Education and Outreach in supporting the related activities and programmes, as well as in achieving the main objectives of the Convention. Consequently, the African Group welcomes all regional meetings held to contribute in formulating recommendations on education and outreach.

**Madam Chairperson,**

The African Group welcomes the appointment of the new Director of the International Cooperation and Assistance, Mr. Hamza Khelif and we look forward to working with him to achieve the objectives of the Organisation as a whole. We have no doubt that the wealth of experience and knowledge you have acquired will further enhance the mandate of the OPCW. Also, the Africa Group would like to commend Dr. Femi Elias, the outgoing Director, Legal Advisor, for the outstanding and exemplary service that he rendered to the OPCW. We would like to wish him well, as he resumes his professional

responsibilities at the World Bank. We look forward to the finalisation of the recruitment process for a suitable candidate for his replacement.

**Madam Chairperson,**

I thank you for your attention and would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Session of the Council.