



OPCW

Executive Council

Eighty-Third Session
11 – 14 October and 11 November 2016

EC-83/NAT.21
11 October 2016
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

CHILE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE
EIGHTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

In addition to once again welcoming you as head of this Council, we reiterate our great willingness to cooperate in addressing the important and complex matters on the agenda for this Council session.

We welcome the report by the Director-General on the state of the Organisation and the activities that it has been working on, as well as the reports by the Vice-Chairmen and facilitators.

We welcome the declaration by the Non-Aligned Movement and China, led by H.E. Ambassador Haifa Aissami of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who has undertaken to coordinate the Movement, and we value the work done to reflect a consensus and serve as a voice for this group.

During the intersessional period, we received the third report by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism established by resolution 2235 (2015) of the Security Council. We support the serious and professional work of this mechanism, as well as the Fact-Finding Mission, which has served as the basis for developing the activities of the former. The information and conclusions contained therein address the use of chemical weapons in Syria in contradiction to the Convention and international humanitarian law, as well as the circumstances in which they were produced. In the face of these acts and the need to preserve our Organisation's capabilities to take action, we are convinced that the Executive Council must adopt the appropriate decisions highlighting the obligations that fall upon the States Parties under the Convention in order to assure the implementation of its objectives. Among these is the obligation to cooperate with investigations and contribute to the adoption of measures that will facilitate the prevention of the use of chemicals as weapons by any actor, including non-State actors, in addition to permitting the development of measures to help identify who is responsible for the use thereof in line with the provisions of resolution 2235 (2015) of the Security Council.

We reiterate our most vehement condemnation of the use of toxic chemicals by any actor, under any circumstances, as well as our conviction that those responsible must be held accountable for their actions. As things currently stand, we believe it necessary to exhaust



every measure to ensure that our decisions are adopted by a consensus, as this will reinforce the OPCW's capabilities to take action and strengthen its international presence.

On the other hand, we also believe that certain highly sensitive matters pertaining to the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic and its chemical weapons programme persist and have not progressed sufficiently. With this in mind, we recall the conclusions of the report that the Director-General submitted on the results of high-level consultations, and we join those calling for the Syrian authorities to broaden their cooperation in order to dispel any and all questions regarding its chemical weapons programme and the termination thereof. We recognise that the Declaration Assessment Team is working on providing assistance to the Syrian Arab Republic on this matter, with professionalism and dedication.

As regards cooperation between this Organisation and its States Parties, we voice our satisfaction with the removal of chemical weapons from the territory of Libya and the progress made in destroying said country's remaining weapons. We value its commitment to fulfil its obligations, even while facing difficult circumstances, as well as the efforts of the Technical Secretariat and a number of other States Parties. With these efforts, we have also prevented these types of chemical agents from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

The agenda for this session includes an item on Article XI of the Convention. As we firmly believe in the need for a practical and systemic approach to the full and effective implementation of said article, we welcome the realisation of a review and evaluation workshop, which we have supported along with other delegations. This meeting should not only focus on evaluating and improving the activities that have been conducted, it should also explore new initiatives and courses of action that may contribute to the discussion of the Organisation's future priorities. We have the ability to move forward in a deliberate manner with measures meant to facilitate the exchange of chemicals, equipment, and technical and scientific information. We believe that rather than focusing on the differences in perspectives on this matter, it is necessary to preserve a broad and constructive exchange of opinions and to take advantage of the opportunities that the Organisation provides for progress.

We support the Programme and Budget for the next year, which brings together in a balanced manner a variety of interests and programmes without increasing regular contributions. We value the efforts of the Technical Secretariat to practise the principles of results-based management and continue to develop a highly systemic approach in evaluating its activities, and we encourage its efforts in this area.

We are pleased to see that the activities of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities of the OPCW have begun. We value the efforts of the Co-Chairpersons in preparing methods and work plans, and we are certain that Ambassadors Sabine Nölke and Bruce Koloane will lead this group with efficiency and dedication, while ensuring that all diverse interests and opinions are heard, with a view to the general and higher purpose of this Organisation.

The most recent report from the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism confirms, in addition to other allegations, the worrying reality of the use of chemicals in ways prohibited by the Convention and international law, and that the risk of chemical terrorist acts is now a reality. We firmly believe that this Organisation has a fundamental role to play in the discussion and development of prevention and response measures to face this phenomenon, and we welcome the forthright and active participation of States Parties, both in the

Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and its Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors. This dialogue should be encouraged in a constructive manner as a useful means of achieving practical and concrete results. The Technical Secretariat's initiative to establish the Rapid Response Assistance Team serves as one example of practical measures, and the operational details of this Team are being refined with support from States Parties.

We recognise that the draft decision entitled "Addressing the Threat Posed by the Use of Chemical Weapons by Non-State Actors" is an effort that brings together the principles, elements, and proposals that give rise to broad support, and we do hope that this proposal will continue to be discussed in a constructive spirit. With support from all of the States Parties, we will be able to enrich our approaches and be certain that we wish to declare a shared vision on this issue.

We believe that with the support of the Technical Secretariat, there is room to make progress on both technical and legal proposals that will strengthen the implementation of the Convention, while bearing in mind the jurisdictional powers of each State.

My delegation reiterates that it would like the use of central nervous system-acting chemicals as riot control agents and the potential use thereof as chemical weapons to be considered within the framework of this Organisation's efforts to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

I like to ask that this statement be considered an official document of this session of the Council and published on the external website of the OPCW.

Thank you.

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