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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR ALIREZA JAHANGIRI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE
OPCW AT THE EIGHTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,

At the outset, I would like to welcome back Your Excellency, Ambassador Melono as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. I have full confidence that under your able leadership, this session will be steered to a successful conclusion. I assure you of the full support and constructive cooperation of my delegation.

I would like to thank the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his comprehensive statement and wish to commend him and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts done.

The Islamic Republic of Iran would like to congratulate, to the chairmanship of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by Her Excellency, Ambassador Madam Haifa Aissami Madah, of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the NAM States Parties to the CWC and China.

I would also like to thank the Director-General for his message and sympathy to the victims of chemical weapons of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Sardasht, by conveying his deepest condolences to them annually. The world could not forget the shocking memories of the use of different types of chemical weapons against the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was a bitter experience in our recent history as the main victim of chemical weapons. We also expect appropriate reflection of the atrocities in Sardasht, and all other chemical attacks during the imposed war by Saddam's regime against my country, in all documents produced and/or published by the OPCW.

The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the Chemical Weapons Convention as a unique disarmament treaty and attaches great importance to its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all its provisions. We believe that the destruction of all chemical weapons



stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons is the most important commitment of every State Party to the Convention. We remain seriously concerned that major possessor States have not complied with the deadline set out for this obligation of the Convention and they need to take all necessary measures to expedite their destruction process as the top priority of the Organisation.

Regarding the Future OPCW Priorities, we believe that the main pillar of the Convention is the complete destruction of all categories of chemical weapons. We are also of the view that the output of the working group should be within the framework of the Convention and not to lead in any way to amend the Convention.

Also, it is necessary to emphasise that the result of future priorities should be coherent and consistent with the Convention and therefore, the OPCW should continue its current focus on chemical disarmament until all chemical arsenals of the world are destroyed. In this way, it is essential to stick with the requirements of the Convention and not raise any idea which is beyond the scope of the Convention as we have witnessed with regard to the recent proposal to expand the scope of declaration and verification of OCPF's.

Similarly, some experts are of the view that the current endeavours may lead to interfere or overlap with the scope and mandate of the other international instruments, including the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

While facing security challenges in the country, the Syrian Arab Republic has achieved significant progress in a very short period of time. Therefore, its efforts deserve to be recognised by the international community. It is a fact that the terrorist groups have had capability as well as intention to use chemical weapons and, unfortunately, it has been increasingly the case against civilians and military of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Recently, we received, through the Director-General, the report of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) on the investigation of perpetrators of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. The report, itself, acknowledges the deficiencies of the FFM reports on which the JIM had also based its conclusion.

We believe that the current report of the JIM is tentative, and a professional investigation on use of chemical weapons indeed should adhere to the needed requirements, including: on-site inspections, using valid and reliable evidences and impartiality and without a politicised method. In fact, to have such professionalism the issue should be tackled furthermore and with a comprehensive approach. In addition, this issue needs to be discussed further in the Security Council of the United Nations as the founder of the JIM that still has not concluded its discussions on this matter.

The universality of the Convention is essential to realisation of its objectives. In this context, 19 years after entry into force of the Convention, we call again upon those outside of the Convention to accede to it without any further delay and preconditions. We also appreciate the Director-General's efforts in promoting full universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The international community recently has faced a new challenging threat of terrorist groups use of toxic chemicals, to tackle this will require appropriate measures at national and international levels. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the acquisition of

chemical weapons, by those terrorist groups, threatens international peace and security. Terrorist attackers and those who assist them to acquire capabilities to attack innocent civilians, must be held accountable. We request all States Parties to refrain from providing any financial, logistical and military support to those terrorist groups and make every effort to prevent them from accessing any kind of toxic chemical substances.

In the context of Article X, as an essential component for national and international security, I would like to emphasise the continuing relevance and importance of its provisions.

In this regard, the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission (RRAM) was long overdue and we welcome strengthening the Technical Secretariat's capacity to respond rapidly to any use of chemical weapons. In this vein, my delegation has already expressed its views during the informal consultations and interactions with the Technical Secretariat with regard to the mandate, structure and composition of the intended establishment of the mission. We believe that the main duty of the RRAM shall be the treatment of victims of chemical weapons and to this end, it suffices to have medical doctors in the mission and it should be under supervision of the Assistance and Protection Branch of the OPCW.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches high priority to the provisions of the Convention on international cooperation and believes that full implementation of Article XI, namely facilitation of the transfer of peaceful chemical technology, required consistency of national legislations with the provisions of Article XI and restraining from imposing any export control in contrary with the transfer regime enshrined in the Convention.

My delegation appreciates works done by the facilitator and the Technical Secretariat in organising the Review and Evaluation workshop to identify and prioritise gaps and obstacles in the way of full implementation of Article XI, in November 2016, and looks forward to a successful workshop with effective and meaningful participation of all States Parties.

It is worth mentioning that in the process of preparation of the Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2017, a constructive cooperation between Austria and my delegation, as the co-facilitators, has led to a fruitful result.

At the end, I would like to request that this statement be made an official document of this session of the Executive Council and published on the external server and public website of the OPCW.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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