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BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE NON-ALIGNED
MOVEMENT THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO
THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AND CHINA
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI MADAH
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BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate and welcome you back, Ambassador Odette Melono of Cameroon as Chairperson of the Executive Council and express my confidence in your able leadership to steer the sessions of the Council during your chairmanship to successful conclusions.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China associates itself with the Final Document and Margarita Declaration of the 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held on 13 to 18 September 2016 on Margarita Island, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

We express our thanks to the Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his informative and comprehensive report delivered in this session and appreciate his efforts and those of his team in the Technical Secretariat to promote the role of the Organisation in the international disarmament regime and to carry out its functions under the Convention.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China while committed to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention, which is essential for the realisation of the objectives and purposes of the Convention, acknowledge that the implementation of the Convention will contribute to international and regional peace and security.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and strongly urge States not Party to the Convention to accede to it without further delay and preconditions. We also emphasise that States remaining outside the Convention should not be able to take advantage of any of the benefits it offers to the States Parties.



The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. Consequently, the NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate their long-standing principled position toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in line with the first paragraph of the preamble of the Convention.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China continue to underline that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention, legal norms and standards of the international community. We also reaffirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable.

Noting with serious concern that the final extended deadline (29 April 2012) for the destruction of chemical weapons was not met by certain possessor States Parties, the NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that the destruction of chemical weapons is the fundamental and top priority of the Organisation and urge all possessor States Parties to take all necessary measures to ensure their compliance with the provisions of the Convention and relevant decisions of the policy-making organs.

We also wish to emphasise the determination expressed by the Third Review Conference that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons, namely old chemical weapons, abandoned chemical weapons and chemical weapons stockpiles, a fundamental pillar of the Convention, shall be completed in the shortest possible time in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and its Annex on Implementation and Verification, and with the full application of the relevant decisions adopted by the policy-making organs.

In this regard, we take note and welcome the achievement made in relation to the process of destruction of the remaining Category II chemical weapons in Libya in line with the obligations pursuant to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Recalling the decisions of the Executive Council with respect to the elimination and destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons, and the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons production facilities, NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the substantive efforts made and progress achieved in this regard and look forward to the continuation of a successful and effective cooperation existing between the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic.

We take note of the work done so far by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), and look forward to receiving its reports on its ongoing activities. We expect the approach followed by the FFM teams would be uniform and consistent.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China condemn the use of the chemical weapons by terrorist groups and are deeply concerned by the threats of the use of chemical weapons by them and request the Technical Secretariat to investigate in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention all reports on the use of chemical weapons and keep the States Parties informed accordingly.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China express their deep concern regarding the attempt to accuse States Parties of using chemical weapons on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations

made by media reports or other open source, including non-governmental entities. This trend can cause a dangerous precedent in the future work of the OPCW.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of Article XI and emphasise the need to speed up efforts in this regard. The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to take in-to consideration our position paper on the implementation of Article XI circulated on 1 December 2016, during the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Bearing in mind of the importance of the adoption of an action plan for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI, the NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the States Parties shall adopt an effective approach and concrete proposals in the current debates in the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities. In this regard, the NAM CWC States Parties and China recognise the importance of the workshop, to be held later this year, as an essential step towards that goal. Therefore, we encourage the promotion of the widest and active participation of States Parties in the workshop. We welcome the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat to enhance the implementation of Article XI, and we believe that this requires continuous collaboration between the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X. We stress the need for all States Parties and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat, upon States Parties' request, to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to respond to the increasing demand of States Parties for assistance. The assistance delivery should be fully consistent with the provisions of the Convention.

While paying respect to all chemical weapons victims and their families, the NAM CWC States Parties and China, in light of the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011), appreciate the States Parties for their contribution to the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage the States Parties to facilitate and make materials and equipment-related assistance available to other States Parties as well as assist and support the victims of chemical weapons, without undue restrictions.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China take note of the latest letter presented by Director-General regarding the RRAM referring to what the OPCW is doing within the framework of the Convention to strengthen its capabilities in the field of protection and assistance upon request of a State Party experiencing chemical emergency. We believe that it is of utmost importance that on this initiative the Director-General should keep the States Parties informed about the emergency measures of assistance and resources available in full compliance with the Convention. In this sense, we encourage further consultations.

In the context of the implementation of Article VII, the NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue providing meaningful assistance and technical support to the States Parties in enhancing their national

capacities, upon request. The Technical Secretariat could then come up with appropriate and tailor-made solutions to overcome the practical difficulties and resource constraints encountered by individual States Parties in carrying out their national implementation measures.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reemphasise that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat to be fair and transparent and stress that it shall be in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Convention. It is also imperative to ensure that the Technical Secretariat observe an equitable geographical and balanced gender representation, particularly at the professional level.

On the follow-up of the Third Review Conference recommendations, the NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the transparent, holistic and balanced approach shall prevail for implementation of these recommendations. In this context, selective approaches shall be prevented. We recall that the Matrix was developed as a mechanism to comprehensively monitor the implementation of the Third Review Conference recommendations. The NAM CWC States Parties and China therefore welcome the update on the progress-made by the Technical Secretariat.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the decision of the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties (C-21/5, dated 2 December 2016) to adopt the programme to strengthen cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention by the Technical Secretariat and are pleased to see the programme continue in an efficient and sustainable way. We are also keen to see this programme conducted in a suitable and equitable manner, and in particular, sponsored by regular budget allocation.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China commend the continuation of the work of the Chairpersons Ambassador of Ghana and Ambassador of Chile of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism and the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors respectively. We also take note of the diverse views on this issue and encourage further dialogue and consultation in accordance with the Convention.

The NAM CWC State Parties and China recognise the importance of education and outreach programmes in achieving the main objectives of the Convention, in this regard we welcome the work done by the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach we also welcome all regional meetings held to contribute in formulating recommendations on education and outreach.

With regard to the future priorities of the Organisation, the NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the discussions need to be brought within the parameters of the policy-making organs (PMOs) guided and driven by States Parties and the main focus of the Organisation should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons, with a strong belief that all pillars of the Convention would be treated in a balanced manner.

We welcome the work done so far by the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities of the OPCW guided by the Co-Chairs, Ambassador of Canada and Ambassador of South Africa. The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage continued discussion to formulate a document in this regard in order to be considered at the Fourth Review Conference. We reiterate the importance of this working group and encourage its close cooperation with all regional groups.

In conclusion Madam Chairperson,

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm the importance and necessity of upholding the principles set out in the Convention in fulfilling the mandate of the Organisation. In this regard, we call upon all States Parties to refrain from proposing any action that does not fall within the scope of the mandate of the OPCW, and does not polarise or politicise its work, in order not to create a precedent that would undermine the future work of the Organisation.

Thanks.

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