



STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR
IFFAT IMRAN GARDEZI,
PAKISTAN'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
TO THE OPCW AT THE EIGHTY FOURTH SESSION
OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 7-10 MARCH 2017.

Madam Chairperson,
Director General and Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I assure you of full support of my delegation in what we hope will be a productive and successful session of the Council.

I wish to thank the Director General for his detailed report on the activities of the Organization and the progress made in important areas during the inter-sessional period.

My delegation identifies itself with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Venezuela on behalf of the States Parties belonging to the Non-aligned Movement and China.

Madame Chairperson,

Within a short span of time, we have learnt of two credible reports about the possible use of chemical weapons in Mosul, Iraq and Malaysia. The report by Malaysian authorities of an assassination carried out on its territory using VX raises concerns about the spread of chemical weapons to a new level.

We condemn any use of chemical weapons by anyone. No circumstances or conditions can justify such a use. The Convention has completed 20 years of its operation. During this period, the Organization has witnessed huge progress towards the elimination of various categories of weapons of mass destruction.

Yet the repeated use of chemical weapons seen recently raises new challenges in our efforts to protect and strengthen the universal norms against chemical

weapons. The OPCW and this Council have the primary responsibility for addressing this serious situation. At the same time, we need to bring such issues within the ambit of serious deliberations on future priorities for the Organization as well as for consideration by the next Review Conference.

In this backdrop, the work of such bodies such as the Open Ended Working Group on Terrorism and Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors also assume greater importance.

We will continue to support the Secretariat's efforts and programmes that are meant for information sharing, coordination and capacity building in States Parties against this menace.

Madam Chairperson,

Pakistan believes that in the view of new types of chemical threats which have emerged, there is a need to enhance international cooperation and allocation of more budgetary resources to mitigate these threats. We welcome the OPCW Technical Secretariat's plans to establish Rapid Response Assistance Team (RRAM). As per Para 8 of Article X of CWC, States Parties affected by the use of chemical weapons have the right to request assistance and protection. Establishment of RRAM will help the Technical Secretariat to comply to any such requests by States Parties in future.

Pakistan also fully supports the Director General's initiative to start a Junior Professional Programme. Such programmes also exist in other international organizations and have proven to be quite useful. Initiative of Junior Professional Programme will help many states parties in capacity building and would also strengthen the linkages between the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the States Parties.

Madam Chairperson,

In order to advance the goals of the Convention, Pakistan continually supports activities that make a practical contribution to the work of the Organisation. This includes hosting cooperative programmes, including, basic and advanced regional and international assistance and protection courses. This year, Pakistan intends to hold the Seventh Advanced Course on Assistance and Protection.

We hope that, as in the previous years, participants from different States Parties will benefit from this course. Organising these programmes also underlines the

priority we attach to the Convention's provisions relating to international cooperation and assistance as well as peaceful uses of chemistry.

Madam Chairperson,

At the end of the year 2018, States Parties will meet at the Fourth Review Conference. The coming months offer us a valuable opportunity to review the work of our Organisation, its achievements as well as its challenges in ensuring that the permanent prohibition of chemical weapons as a guiding principle of the Convention, continues to attract strong international support.

Madam Chairperson,

Pakistan strongly supports the work of the Open Ended Working on Future Priorities under the chairpersonship of the Ambassadors of Canada and South Africa. Pakistan strongly supports all the efforts at enhancing the effectiveness of Chemical Weapons Convention. Keeping in view the threat of Chemical Weapons falling into the hands of non-state actors, we have to come up with ways and means for a stronger regime of verifications and avoidance of the use of possibilities of any Chemical Weapons in future by anyone. At the same time, we feel that there is a need to consider ways and means to bringing greater substance and result-orientation to the work of the group.

Madam Chairperson,

We know that the OPCW Technical Secretariat is making efforts to select the human resource for various vacancies from different geographical regions. However, to ensure a broad based geographical representation, the Technical Secretariat needs to invigorate its efforts to achieve this objective.

Madam Chairperson,

In the coming weeks, we will start the process of selection of the new Director General for OPCW. It is our hope that the organization will in the end be able to select a Director General who would have broad support of the States parties as well as have the intellect and vision to lead the OPCW in an exemplary manner as the present Director General Ahmed Uzumcu has done.

I would like to conclude my statement by once again underlining the importance we attach to the work of this Council. The OPCW has in recent years faced difficult challenges and succeeded because States Parties remained committed to

the Convention. The spirit of consensus that has been the hall mark of our process at the OPCW has been seen to have been compromised even when it was not necessary. We therefore, need to make efforts to engage ourselves without politicising the issues and without harming the spirit of consensus in the larger interest of all.

I feel confident that we will continue to work in this positive spirit in order to conclude this session of the Council successfully.

I request that my statement be circulated as an official document of the Eighty Fourth Session of the Executive Council.

This may also be posted on the OPCW External Server and Public website.

Thank you very much!