



**Statement by
Mr. Kazi Russel Pervez, Counsellor of the Embassy of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh in the Netherlands and Alternate Permanent Representative to the
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the Eighty-Fifth Session of the
Executive Council**

The Hague, 11-14 July 2017

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Chairperson of the Executive Council Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal,
Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü,
Distinguished delegates,
Excellencies,

I welcome Your Excellency Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Belal back as the Chairperson of the Executive Council. We express our confidence in you and hope that under your able leadership the conduct of business of this session will come to a successful conclusion.

We wish to take the opportunity to register our appreciation to Her Excellency Ambassador Odette Melono of Cameroon for all her hard work and dedicated efforts during her chairpersonship of the Executive Council during 2016-2017.

The delegation of Bangladesh also wishes to thank the Director-General for his report, as well as the Vice-Chairpersons for their respective reports presented at this session. Our delegation associates itself with the statement made at this session by the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Her Excellency Ambassador Haifa Aissami Madah, on behalf of the NAM CWC States Parties and China.

As an original signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Bangladesh proudly joins the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention and the establishment of the OPCW. Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina issued a message on 29 April this year on this auspicious occasion. In her message, the Hon'ble Prime Minister expressed Bangladesh's firm commitment to the aspirations of the OPCW in making the world safer by eliminating the threat of chemical weapons both by destroying the stockpile and preventing re-emergence of such weapon in any form, and reiterated utmost support of Bangladesh for the Convention and the OPCW towards achieving our common goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

Bangladesh attaches paramount importance to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and, therefore, we would like to urge the remaining States that are not Parties to the Convention to consider acceding to the Convention at the earliest. Bangladesh, as a leading contributor to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations across the world, deeply values its sacrifice and contribution to world peace. In the same spirit, we also remain eager to contribute to the OPCW with every possible means.

While we note progress in disposing off the declared chemical weapons stockpiles in the Syrian Arab Republic, we strongly condemn the use of sarin or a sarin-like substance and sulfur mustard as weapons respectively in Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017 and in Um Housh on 16 September 2016, as concluded by the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria. In this regard, Bangladesh reiterates its long-standing principled position towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and reaffirms 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 and all norms of international law. We would like to urge all to do their utmost for upholding the Convention under any circumstances.

Bangladesh continues to fulfil its obligations under Article VII of the Convention relating to national implementation measures. We deeply appreciate the active encouragement and support of the Technical Secretariat to this end. Bangladesh believes that the States Parties lacking capacity and capability would get appropriate assistance and technical support for enabling them for the full implementation of the Convention. We would also like to urge all for a systematic approach to the full and effective implementation of Article XI taking into due consideration of the needs of the developing States Parties.

Bangladesh recognizes the importance of future priorities of the OPCW, and in this regard commends the work done so far by the Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities, guided by the Co-Chairs, Ambassador Sabine Nölke of Canada and Ambassador Bruce Koloane of South Africa. Bangladesh encourages continued discussion to formulate a document in this regard in order to be adopted at the Fourth Review Conference.

We believe that all members of this Council, and in fact, all States Parties have a very important issue of appointing a new Director-General for this august body. Bangladesh believes that the appointment process should be fair, open, and transparent in order to ensure wider support for the incoming Director-General; and hope that this Council would be able to recommend the best candidate by consensus to the next Conference of the States Parties for the very interest of this successful Organization.

While re-emphasizing that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat has to be fair, Bangladesh believes that it is imperative to ensure an equitable geographical and balanced gender representation, particularly at the professional level in the Technical Secretariat. As a capacity building measure, we hope that the Technical Secretariat will find innovative means like dedicated funding arrangement to cater to the applicants from the developing States Parties for the proposed JPO programme.

Before I conclude, let us commit once again to achieve our common goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

I ask that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
