

**JOINT STATEMENT****ON BEHALF OF
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC, THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA**

We, the States-Parties, share the concerns of Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Poland, New Zealand, Romania, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America over the continuing use of chemical weapons, notwithstanding an international legal ban.

We believe that it is necessary to emphasise the importance of implementation, by all States Parties, of their commitments including the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles and abandoned chemical weapons, entirely, timely and in good faith.

According to Article VIII of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) is the principal policy-making organ of the Organisation composed of all its members, and it is entrusted to consider all issues of high importance for the object and purpose of the Convention. The Conference is convened on a regular basis and holds annual sessions and special review conferences every five years. This provides for discussions on matters of concern in a scheduled manner without involving a special session. Now, the preparations are under way with regard to the annual session of the Conference, as well as the Forth Review Conference.

Given the unique status of the Conference, as well as the time, financial, and human resource spending related to the preparation of this event, we are of the view that for convening a special session of the Conference it is necessary to have, first and foremost, a meaningful and highly important reason directly related to the object and purpose of the Convention. Thus, it is not only about complying with the procedural requirements including a formal request of a State Party supported by one third of the Member States.

The Explanatory Memorandum attached to the Technical Secretariat’s Note with the formal request of a group of Member States to convene a special session of the Conference does not allow to identify such a reason. The expressed “concern” over the continuing use of chemical weapons does not constitute such a reason. This issue should be discussed either during a regular session of the Conference or at a Review Conference. Moreover, this topic is currently scheduled to be discussed at regular Executive Council sessions in July and October.



The initiative to convene, urgently, a special session of the Conference in the absence of a significant reason makes us doubt that the requesting Member-States are really concerned about fulfilling their commitments under the Convention as well as respecting the principal policy-making organs evidenced by the ongoing attempts to misuse the Convention and the Rules of Procedure of the Conference for selfish and opportunistic purposes.

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