

Joint Statement

on Behalf of Belarus, Bolivia, China, Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nicaragua, the State of Palestine, the Russian Federation, Syria and Venezuela

delivered by H.E. Ambassador Andrei Yeudachenka Permanent Representative of the Republic of Belarus to the OPCW at the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties under Agenda Item 18 Fostering of international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical activities

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to begin by greeting Your Excellency Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina Almir Sahovich on your assumption as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of the State Parties. 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.

Recognizing the role of the chemical industry in the sustainable economic and technological development of the States Parties, we advocate for strengthened international cooperation and support for the growth of the chemical sector for purposes not prohibited by the Convention.

For this reason, we firmly support measures aimed at strengthening national capacity of the OPCW State Parties through promoting international cooperation in research, development, production, acquisition, storage, trade and safe use of chemicals, cooperation between chemical industry companies and associations, exchanges between scientific communities and academic institutions.

In this regard, we believe that the achievements of our Organization and the States Parties in the destruction of chemical weapons and prevention of their use, however significant and important they are, should not obscure the fact that over the past several years there has been a sharp increase in the use of various unilateral and collective coercive measures and barriers to cooperation in the chemical sector. These politically biased or purely protectionist measures restrict the development of production and trade of peaceful chemicals, impede the promotion of scientific and technological knowledge in the fields of chemistry for industrial, agricultural, medical, pharmaceutical and other peaceful purposes, constitute a serious violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and International law.

In the same manner, some countries are improperly using their participation or adherence to multilateral export control regimes as a justification for imposing the unilateral coercive measures.

We stress the importance of ensuring that all States Parties have equal access to scientific and technical information, technologies, chemicals and equipment for the production, processing or peaceful use of chemicals.

We condemn in strongest terms discriminatory restrictions and illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed by a State Party or a group of State Parties against other State Parties, which impede or restrict international cooperation in the field of chemistry, further undermine trust among the States Parties and are completely contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention.

We urge the State Parties to lift immediately all their illegal unilateral coercive measures, politically motivated restrictions, sanctions, excessive regulations in the sphere of production, storage, transit, transportation and use of chemical products for peaceful purposes.

We emphasize that further recognition and addressing the promotion of international cooperation in production of and trade in chemicals for peaceful purposes must become one of the main priorities and functions of the OPCW. For that purpose, we reiterate a repeated on many occasions appeal by a large number of the States Parties to the Technical Secretariat to focus on the issues

of our concern and to give priority to peaceful development in effective implementation of Article XI of the Convention.

To ensure the removal of all unilateral coercive measures, restrictions and sanctions incompatible with the Convention, we appeal to the Conference of States Parties and request the Technical Secretariat to establish a review mechanism and to provide, in cooperation with the States Parties, a profound report on full and non-discriminative implementation of Article XI, especially on sanctions, barriers, gaps and existing challenges.

This appeal also applies to enhancing international scientific cooperation with the assistance of the recently established Chem Tech Centre.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Group of our countries requests that this Statement should be published on the catalyst and the OPCW website.