

NATIONAL STATEMENT OF H.E. J. EDUARDO MALAYA,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE
ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS
AT THE 29TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
25 - 29 November 2024

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation congratulates and welcomes Ambassador Almir Sahovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina on his election as Chairperson of the 29th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Ambassador Sahovic's diplomatic skills and years of experience will assure us of a successful meeting. I wish to assure the Chair of the full cooperation of my delegation in reaching a successful outcome of this Session.

My Delegation also congratulates Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar of Pakistan for his excellent and very able chairmanship of the 28th Conference of States Parties and the subsequent General Committee Meetings that prepared this Session.

My Delegation also lauds the dedication and hard work of the Technical Secretariat, headed by Director-General Fernando Arias, in ensuring the proper monitoring and implementation of the mandate and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Technical Secretariat can count on the Philippines' continued support.

Mr. Chairperson,

I am pleased to inform this Session that with me, as part of the Philippine delegation, are officials from the Philippine National Authority which further affirms the Philippine commitment to continue its pro-active engagements with the OPCW especially in our national implementation efforts.

Relatedly, my Delegation is pleased to inform the Conference of the steady progress towards a comprehensive national implementing legislation that will upgrade the country from partially to fully compliant with the Convention.

The Senate Bill 2871 or the proposed Chemical Weapons Prohibitions Act is scheduled to be passed by the end of the year in the Philippine Senate, and we hope the enactment is officially signed into law by the President in the first quarter of 2025. The participation of the members of the Philippine House of Representatives in the last year's Conference, and their meetings with relevant officials of the Technical Secretariat contributed immensely in the expedited consideration of the bill in the Lower House of Congress. We are optimistic of the eventual passage of the bill.

With these continued efforts, allow me to assure this Conference that the commitment of the Philippines to the object and purpose of the Convention remains steadfast. We will continue to work and support measures which aim to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of its provisions, essential to the enhancement of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairperson,

My Delegation congratulates the Government of Morocco and the Technical Secretariat on the successful Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the CWC in October, which brought together policymakers, scientists and relevant stakeholders to examine challenges and opportunities posed by artificial intelligence in chemical disarmament and non-proliferation. The Philippines is proud to have been part of this Conference.

We also welcome the inclusion of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on the agenda of the regular sessions of the EC, and in the discussions within the Organisation. The Philippines attaches great importance to the need to raise awareness and promote better understanding of the multifaceted nature of emerging technologies. We welcome discussions on various aspects of emerging technologies in the field of international peace and security to build common understandings that facilitate collective action.

It is in this context that we highlight the importance and critical role of the Scientific Advisory Board in rendering experts' advice to the Technical Secretariat, the Executive Council and the Conference on developments in science and technology; thereby ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention, notably the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and the promotion of safe and peaceful uses of chemistry.

The Philippines thus proudly welcomes and supports the election of Dr. Imee Su Martinez, current SAB Vice Chair, as incoming Chairperson of the Scientific Advisory Board for 2025, the first Filipino elected to assume the position. We are pleased to know that a Filipino is at the forefront of this worthy endeavor.

Mr. Chairperson,

Beyond disarmament, the Philippines appreciates the work of the Organisation in the area of capacity building, assistance and protection, and promotion of the safe and peaceful uses of chemistry. Philippine scientists, first responders and National Authority officials benefitted immensely in OPCW's training courses and workshops held over the recent years in the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, India, Finland, Switzerland, Pakistan, Qatar, Malaysia and UAE, as well as in the OPCW's Associate Programme. My delegation would also like to extend its appreciation to the Host Countries of these training courses for their support and commitment to the Convention. Capacity building must remain a key element in the work of the OPCW, and its effectiveness and efficiency should be further enhanced.

My Delegation congratulates Algeria's National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the Gendarmerie Nationale for its accreditation as an OPCW Designated Laboratory this year, which as mentioned by H.E. Ambassador Salima Abdelhak was "a result of hard work and cooperation with the OPCW and other partners." We are pleased to note that, with the said designation, the OPCW now has a designated laboratory in every continent.

It is in this respect that I wish to convey the Philippines keenness to having a laboratory accredited as an OPCW Laboratory. We are committed to pursue partnerships and

initiatives that can assist our country in strengthening the capabilities of its chemical laboratories and encourages the provision of trainings that will upgrade the skills of our experts in chemical analysis, synthesis, and reporting through the OPCW's capacity-building activities and individual assistance to specific laboratories working towards achieving a designation status.

Mr. Chairperson,

Humanity remains in a state of danger from too many destructive and disruptive weapons in existence. The Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary in his UN General Assembly address cited the need to complete the unfinished business of eliminating weapons of mass destruction; and the total elimination of chemical weapons entails universal adherence to the Convention. In this regard, the Philippines appreciates the Technical Secretariat's efforts to achieve universality of the Convention, and calls on the other remaining non-parties to the Convention to accede to it.

The Philippines firmly believes in the power of dialogue and diplomacy. We note the progress of the consultations between the Declaration and Assessment Team and the Syrian National Authority which recently concluded its 28th round of consultations. We call on the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic to continue working together in a more constructive manner and without further delay to complete the latter's declarations, close its outstanding issues satisfactorily with due regard to relevant CSP decisions and provisions of the Convention, and finally close Syria's dossier.

Mr. Chairperson,

We wish to highlight the importance of consensus building in the functioning of the OPCW and call on all States Parties to continue the work of the OPCW in a spirit of cooperative endeavor and remain firm in their commitment to prohibit the proliferation of chemical weapons in all its forms.

I request that this statement be made an official document of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and posted in the OPCW website.