

**Statement
by H E Tareque Muhammad
Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bangladesh
to the OPCW at the 107th Executive Council Meeting**

Mr. Chairperson
Excellencies,
Director-General,

As this is the first time I am taking the floor before this Executive Council, allow me to congratulate Ambassador Andrés Parral of Ecuador on his continued leadership as Chair of the 107th Session of Executive Council. We are confident that under his able stewardship, this Council will deliver meaningful progress in its proceedings.

Bangladesh commends Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias for his able leadership in attaining OPCW's stated objectives. Appreciation is due to his team for conducting the organization's operations in a judicious manner. OPCW's role is as significant as our transition into the post-destruction phase following the historic accomplishment of eliminating declared chemical weapons. This achievement constantly strengthens our collective resolve towards our journey to a world free of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chair,

As a fast-developing economy with ever growing industrial capacity Bangladesh's increasing use of chemicals is unavoidable. Bangladesh, however, remains firmly committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and its objectives, thereby utilizing chemicals in a responsible manner. We see it as our responsibility to work alongside all States Parties in ensuring the Convention's effective implementation, contributing to a safer world for future generations. At the same time, Bangladesh has always stood by its stated principle against proliferation of destructive weapons including chemical ones.

Mr. Chair

The fundamental obligations set out in Article I of the Convention continue to serve as a cornerstone of our national efforts, ensuring that chemicals are used exclusively for peaceful purposes. As the Convention advances into its fourth decade, Bangladesh remains keen to support initiatives that strengthen the Technical Secretariat's (TS) role in monitoring the peaceful use of chemicals and promoting international cooperation.

We would like to further reiterate full implementation of Article VI, which promotes chemical safety and security, especially for developing nations. Equitable access to advancements in chemical technology remains a priority within the OPCW's universal framework, as it ensures that all nations, particularly those from the developing countries, can benefit from these developments while maintaining a safe and secure environment.

Mr. Chair,

Moving forward into the post-destruction phase, we see the establishment of the ChemTech Centre as a significant step towards smooth transition. It holds the potential to enhance the Organisation's capabilities in addressing emerging chemical threats, facilitating the peaceful use of chemicals, and supporting sustainable development across the member states. Bangladesh strongly supports the ChemTech Centre's mission to foster capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, especially for developing countries like ours.

Mr. Chair,

From the perspective of the Global South, Bangladesh underscores the vital importance of the assistance and protection provisions under Article X of the Convention. As chemicals continue to play a crucial role in our growing economy, our national stakeholders, including scientific communities and practitioners, face challenges in keeping up with rapid advancements in chemical technologies.

We urge the OPCW to take a balanced approach in resource management, ensuring that the needs of developing countries are adequately and equitably addressed. Equally important is the promotion of initiatives such as fully funded Junior Professional Programs, particularly from underrepresented nations, which would bolster ownership and participation in the Organisation's activities.

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh continues to emphasize the importance of ensuring diversity within the Technical Secretariat. A balanced and geographically representative staff composition is essential to maintain the Organisation's international character thereby upholding universal ethos of multiculturalism.

Mr. Chair,

As the Asia Group Representative, Bangladesh, along with colleagues from 14 other States Parties, recently participated in a visit to China to inspect Abandoned Chemical Weapons (ACW) sites. I would like to thank the Government of China, Government of Japan and the OPCW for organizing the visit. During this visit, I had the opportunity to observe the progress made in the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan. The visit, which included briefings from both Chinese and Japanese officials, as well as inspections by the OPCW, underscored the importance of international cooperation in advancing the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). I commend the efforts of China, Japan, and the OPCW, and reaffirm Bangladesh's commitment to global disarmament and a world free of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chair,

We remain deeply concerned about the reported use of chemicals in conflict zones and take note of the efforts of the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian authorities in resolving outstanding issues. The twenty-eighth round of consultations in September this year between the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and Syrian authorities is a positive step towards addressing these complex challenges. Bangladesh also strongly advocates for the universality of the Convention and urges remaining non-member states to join the CWC and contribute to global peace and security.

Furthermore, the threat of toxic chemicals being used by non-state actors, including the risk of chemical terrorism, remains a critical concern for the international community. We commend the ongoing work of Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela of South Africa in leading efforts to address this issue, particularly through his leadership in the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T).

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh acknowledges the important role of the Scientific Advisory Board in exploring the intersections of chemistry, biology, and emerging technologies e.g. AI, and ensuring the OPCW stays at the forefront of chemical safety and security. We also commend the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach for integrating chemical education with modern technologies, which is crucial for building long-term resilience against chemical threats.

Bangladesh acknowledges the important role that civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play in supporting the objectives of the Convention. However, we believe that participation by NGOs in OPCW proceedings must adhere to principles of objectivity, transparency, and credibility.

Mr. Chairperson,

My delegation believes that the future success of the Convention lies in fostering cooperation and building trust among States Parties, through technical expertise, impartiality, and consensus-building. The evolving global landscape calls for closer collaboration now more than ever. We look forward to continuing our constructive engagement with all States Parties to ensure that the Organisation remains an effective guardian of chemical safety and security in this new era.

I kindly request that this statement be issued as an official document of the 107th Executive Council and made available on the public website.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.
