

**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY H.E. FRANCIS D. KOTIA AMBASSADOR OF
GHANA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS AND PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA TO OPCW AT THE 107th
SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: 08-11 OCTOBER, 2024**

**Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

On behalf of the delegation of Ghana, I wish to assure the Chairperson, *H.E. Mr Andres Horacio Teran Parral, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the OPCW*, of Ghana's support of his chairmanship of *this One Hundred and Seventh* Session of the Executive Council in steering the deliberations of the session to a successful conclusion.

2. My delegation also likes to commend the Director-General, H.E. Mr Fernando Arias, for his detailed report which among others, provides an overview of the status of the Organisation and the implementation of the Convention aimed at further strengthening the work of the OPCW. In a similar vein, I commend the staff of the Technical Secretariat for their dedication and diligence towards the work of the Organisation.
3. My delegation associates itself with the statement of the African Group and the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement and China delivered by H.E. Ms. Mirjam Blaak Sow, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the OPCW.
4. I would like to reaffirm Ghana's commitment to the purpose and object of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We believe universal ratification of the Convention is essential to achieving the ultimate goal of a world permanently free of chemical weapons, their deployment and re-emergence in favour of international peace and security. My delegation commends the Technical Secretariat for its tireless efforts in this regard and calls on States not yet Party to the Convention to ratify or accede to it without further delay or preconditions.

Chairperson, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

5. Ghana commends the Technical Secretariat for its continuous support for the Africa Programme in furtherance of the effective implementation of the Convention in Africa. We note the progress of the Sixth Phase of the Programme, notably, the 12 capacity-building activities on addressing diverse objectives of the 6th Phase which have been delivered between 9 July 2024 to 8 October 2024.
6. My delegation is pleased with the action plan to promote and streamline bilateral cooperation between the Technical Secretariat and the African Union Commission for effective delivery of the Africa Programme. While acknowledging the financial constraints of the Secretariat, we reiterate the African Group's call for funding of the Africa Programme under the regular budget of the OPCW to ensure its sustainability.

7. We welcome the recommendation by the decision on Biennial Programme and Budget of the OPCW (2024-2025), adopted by the CSP-28, which calls on the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to work collectively on achieving the full and effective implementation of the ICA programmes, notably in developing States Parties. This would ensure the avoidance of transfers between major programmes, while considering the retention of unspent funds for ICA in a special fund.
8. As a beneficiary of the provision of logistics and expertise by the OPCW and capacity building programmes from United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), The European Union (EU) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE), The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Ghana expresses its appreciation to these key stakeholders for their partnerships and assistance, and also commends the OPCW for its continued commitment to the effective implementation of Articles VII, X and XI of the Convention.
9. My delegation is pleased with the relative progress of the work of the FFM and DAT in Syria as stated in the most recent classified briefings by the Technical Secretariat. We encourage further productive dialogue between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Technical Secretariat with a view to resolving all outstanding verification and disarmament-related issues with utmost urgency and purpose.
10. Additionally, Ghana is concerned with the threat of the re-emergence of toxic chemicals and the alleged use of chemical weapons, and condemns in the strongest possible terms, the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, and under any circumstances. We also deplore the use of riot-control agents in the theatres of conflicts. We believe all States Parties are under the obligation to work collectively to hold perpetrators of Chemical Weapons accountable in order to end the culture of impunity while confronting chemical terrorism.
11. Considering the threats of use and dangers from chemical terrorism, as well as the rapid pace of progress in science and technology, my delegation fully supports the Director General's call for continues vigilance against existing and emerging threats to prevent the re-emergence of these weapons. In this regard, we look forward to the outcomes of the "Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention" scheduled to be held in Rabat from 22-24 October 2024 which aims to address the evolving risks of AI as a cross-cutting technology within the context of the Convention, focusing on its implications for chemical security and disarmament. This conference would build on the issues raised at the July 2024 Berlin Conference on the risks, challenges, and opportunities for the application of AI related to Weapons of Mass Destruction.
12. Ghana also aligns itself with the efforts of Germany and Costa Rica on their joint facilitation on the role of Civil Society on effective implementation of the CWC.
13. In this regard, it is my delegation's view that it is by fostering closer relationships with experts in the chemical industry, academia, other relevant organisations, that the Secretariat could better complement the advice and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) on the emerging threats, including AI.

14. It is our believe that the consistent coordination between international organisations and relevant stakeholders is key to creating awareness on chemical security while States Parties work together on preventing chemical terrorism within the framework of the Convention. In this regard, my delegation commends the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism under the abled chairmanship of H.E. Vusimuzi Mandosela, the Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa.
15. On organisational governance, Ghana associates itself with calls for greater transparency, gender parity and equitable geographical representation of States Parties at all levels of the organisation towards greater efficiency in the delivery of the organisation's mandate. In this regard, we look forward to the Secretariat's report on the status of implementation of the Action Plan on Geographical Representation as decided by CSP-28.

Mr Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

16. In conclusion, my delegation calls for the spirit of engagement, dialogue, effective cooperation and consensus building, among States Parties in as much as practicable, towards the full implementation of the Convention.
17. May I please request that this national statement of Ghana be published on the public website and catalyst as an official document of this session.
18. I thank you for your kind attention