

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR OLUREMI OLIYIDE ,
CHARGÉ D' AFFAIRES OF THE EMBASSY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF NIGERIA TO THE OPCW AT THE HUNDREDTH AND SEVENTH
SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (EC-107), 8 TO 11 OCTOBER
2024**

Mr. Chairperson

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Nigeria is delighted to join other delegations once again at this Forum after a much-needed summer holiday.

Nigeria congratulates Amb. Andres Horacio Terran Parral for his sterling leadership in steering EC-106 to a successful conclusion. We wish you well in your subsequent endeavours.

My delegation commends the Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the entire staff of the Technical Secretariat for their dedication to the work of the Organisation.

The Nigerian delegation aligns with the Statement of the African Group delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ghana, Ambassador Francis Kotia, and the Statement of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China, delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the OPCW, Ambassador, Ms. Mirjam Sow.

Mr. Chairman

The Nigerian delegation commends the unrelenting effort of the Technical Secretariat for reaching out to States Parties yet to accede to the Convention. My delegation believes States Parties should collaborate more with the Technical Secretariat in achieving the onerous task of universalisation through sustained dialogue with the major stakeholders on the imperative of the Chemical Weapons Convention in maintaining global peace and security.

My delegation continues to monitor developments between the National Authority of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) . We welcome the 28th Round of Consultation expected to take place. We earnestly hope that the visit will serve as springboard for future dialogue in resolving outstanding issues in respect of the chemical weapons declaration in Syria.

The recent visit organised by the Technical Secretariat to monitor, inspect, and verify declarations of recovered Abandoned Chemical Weapons (ACWs) on the Chinese territory was a needed venture to demonstrate serious commitment and the transparency of the affected parties in compliance with their obligation under the Convention. My delegation commends the continued cooperation between the Chinese and Japanese authorities and urges that dialogue be maintained in resolving any disputes that may arise in fulfilling this herculean task.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation reiterates its view that the OPCW can consolidate its leading position as a disarmament institution by working more closely with National Authorities and assisting National Authorities of capacity-constrained States Parties in the implementation of the CWC. Mentorship and partnership programmes can also complement the technical assistance provided to States Parties in support of their implementation. My delegation takes this opportunity to solicit more mentoring programmes for the ECOWAS sub-region.

Mr. Chairman

As delivered in our various submissions to this august body, it is the desire of the Nigerian delegation that the implementation of Africa Programme via the regular budget should be given adequate consideration for predictability and hitch-free implementation. It is satisfactory that progress was recorded on various programmes by the Organisation in the area of regional workshops on best practices in the development of legislation and regulatory frameworks on chemical security. We also acknowledge the salutary advisory roles rendered to States Parties on designing and implementing their national implementation frameworks. My delegation would continue to lend its maximum support to the Technical Secretariat in its bids to achieve the core objectives of the sixth phase of the programme.

Nigeria notes the Director General's report on the progress made on the implementation of Article XI. In particular, we commend the effort of the Organisation in bringing chemical management and enhancement of laboratories to the front burner. As a delegation, we believe that creating more awareness for National Authorities of States Parties in developing economies in the area of enhancing laboratory capabilities through Laboratory Twinning and Assistance Programme, Customs Laboratory Training, etc. would be imperative in the quest of developing nations to attain OPCW laboratory status. In expressing our satisfaction with the progress report, my delegation believes that a sustained review and evaluation mechanism on various workshops and programmes carried out will be imperative to ensure complete and efficient implementation of various initiatives under Article XI.

In the same vein, my delegation is delighted to collaborate with the delegation of the United States of America in organising Tabletop Exercise in Nigeria next year for ECOWAS States Parties under Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention. As earlier mentioned during EC-106, it is our fervent hope that the Exercise will put ECOWAS member states in good stead to respond effectively during chemical incidents as elucidated in Article X of the Convention.

Mr Chairman

The possibility of the use of toxic chemicals by non-state actors cannot be overruled, especially as we are witnessing so many centres of armed conflict around the world. My delegation is abreast of the excellent job being undertaken by the chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela of the Republic of South Africa, and his team to mitigate the risk of chemical terrorism. My delegation urges the Technical Secretariat to continue collaborating with the United Nations Resolution 1540 Group of Experts in strengthening the capacity of relevant institutions such as the police, the military, and public health institutions in all States Parties to prevent chemical attacks. Preparing the organisation to anticipate this possibility would be in our best interest.

The focus of the globe now centres on the unprecedented development in the area of Artificial Intelligence. This technological advancement has continued to stimulate scientific research and development because of its complexity, dynamism, and interdisciplinary nature. In light of the evolving nature of AI, my delegation commends the leadership of the Organisation for bringing discussion on AI to the forefront through programmes and activities aimed at awareness and insights into the technological landscape, opportunities, and risks associated with AI development. In this connection, my delegation looks forward to tangible outcomes from the forthcoming conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence In Advancing Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Morocco later this year.

Mr. Chairman

The importance of recruiting experienced staff with the requisite skills and expertise at the OPCW cannot be overstated. That is why my delegation would continue to support the Decision reached during the Conference of States Parties 28 on Tenure Policy. We believe that the swift implementation of the Decision would engender inclusivity and finally put to rest the agitation over the question of marginalisation with respect to staff compliment at the Technical Secretariat.

I thank you.

My delegation requests that this Statement be circulated as an official document and posted on the External Server as an official document of this Session.