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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR ALIREZA JAHANGIRI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
TO THE OPCW ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE NON-ALIGNED
MOVEMENT THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL CONVENTION AND CHINA AT THE
TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (NAM CWC States Parties) and China, I would like to welcome you, Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola-Nicolín of Mexico, to the Chair of the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and express our confidence in your able leadership to steer this conference to a successful conclusion.

We also wish to take the opportunity to appreciate the Chairperson of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, Ambassador Vesela Mrđen Korać of Croatia for all her dedicated efforts during the Nineteenth Session.

We express our thanks to the Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his informative and comprehensive report delivered in this session and appreciate his efforts and his team in the Technical Secretariat to promote the role of the Organisation in the international disarmament regime and to carry out its functions under the Convention.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China while committed to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention which is essential for the realisation of the objectives and purposes of the Convention, acknowledge that the implementation of the Convention will contribute to the international and regional peace and security.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. Consequently, the NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate their long-standing principled position toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in line with the first paragraph of the preamble of the Convention.



The NAM CWC States Parties and China continue to underline that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention, legal norms and standards of the international community. We also affirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that the total destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons, is a fundamental pillar of the Convention.

Noting with serious concern that the final extended deadline (29 April 2012) for the destruction of chemical weapons was not met by certain possessor States Parties, the NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that the destruction of chemical weapons is the fundamental and top priority of the Organisation and urge all possessor States Parties to take all necessary measures to ensure their compliance with the provisions of the Convention and relevant decisions of the policy-making organs.

In this regard, we welcome the anticipated completion of destruction of the remaining chemical weapons in four chemical weapons destruction facilities in the Russian Federation by the end of 2015.

We also wish to emphasise the determination expressed by the Third Review Conference that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons, namely old chemical weapons, abandoned chemical weapons and chemical weapons stockpiles shall be completed in the shortest possible time in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and its Annex on Implementation and Verification, and with the full application of the relevant decisions adopted by the policy-making organs.

We welcome the visit by the Chairperson and representatives of the Executive Council to the Haerbaling abandoned chemical weapons destruction site in China in June 2015. We believe such visits facilitate the Council to obtain a better understanding and assist in the process of the destruction of the ACWs.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the universality of the Convention and we welcome Myanmar and Angola as the new States Parties to the Convention. In this regard we hereby strongly call on remaining States not Party to the Convention to accede to it without further delay and preconditions. We also emphasise that states remaining outside the Convention should not be able to take advantage of any of the benefits it offers to the States Parties.

Recalling the decisions of the Executive Council at its meetings with respect to the elimination and destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons and welcoming the cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the implementation of the relevant Executive Council decisions towards the elimination of its chemical weapons, the NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the significant progress achieved in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons and in the destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities.

We take note of the work done so far by the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), and look forward to receiving its final report. We expect the approach followed by the FFM teams would be uniform and consistent.

We also take note of the Note by the Director-General (S/1302/2015, dated 11 August 2015), which includes the United Nations Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) regarding the establishment of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). We expect that JIM will conduct its mission in a professional, objective and impartial manner and we look forward to close collaboration between the United Nations and the OPCW.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of Article XI and emphasise the need to speed up efforts in this regard.

We are convinced that the adoption of an action plan for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is paramount and cannot be excluded. However, for the sake of reaching consensus, the NAM CWC States Parties and China developed a working paper containing a broad range of proposals for consideration by the States Parties. We look forward to constructive discussion on the proposals submitted by all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat.

In this regard we welcome the efforts made by the Technical Secretariat to enhance the implementation of Article XI, and we believe that this requires continuous collaboration between the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties.

We also underline that the following elements should be taken into consideration by the policy-making organs of the Organisation, inter alia:

1. Allocation of adequate financial and human resources in the annual Programme and Budget of the Organisation for the implementation of Article XI related programmes and initiatives within the Technical Secretariat;
2. Adoption of necessary actions or decisions to implement the relevant recommendations of the Third Review Conference regarding Article XI; and
3. Promotion of international cooperation for the benefit of States Parties through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field and removal of any discriminatory restrictions such as unilateral sanctions against other States Parties that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention and affect the Convention's long-term viability and have an adverse impact on the existing trust among the States Parties.

In the context of the implementation of Article VII, the NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue to provide meaningful assistance and technical support to the States Parties to enhance national capacities, at their request, and to come up with appropriate and tailored solutions to overcome the practical difficulties and resource constraints encountered by individual States Parties in carrying out their national implementation measures.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X. We stress the need for all States Parties and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to respond to the increasing demand of States Parties for assistance

While paying due respect to all chemical weapons victims and their families, the NAM CWC States Parties and China, in light of the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011), appreciate the States Parties and the Director-General who contributed to the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons. We welcome the activation and activities of the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons and encourage the States Parties to contribute to its Voluntary Trust Fund.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage the States Parties to facilitate and make materials and equipment-related assistance available to other States Parties and to assist and support the victims of chemical weapons, without undue restrictions.

On the follow-up of the Third Review Conference recommendations, the NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the transparent, holistic and balanced approach shall prevail for implementation of these recommendations. In this context, selective approaches shall be prevented. We recall that the Matrix was developed as a mechanism to comprehensively monitor the implementation of the Third Review Conference recommendations. The NAM CWC States Parties and China therefore welcome the update on the progress-made by the Technical Secretariat.

On the Draft Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2016, we wish to underline the importance in achieving balance among the different items of the OPCW budget. While highlighting the importance of international cooperation and assistance and the obligations of the States Parties in this regard, we are of the view that the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW also plays an important role in the effective implementation of Article XI of the Convention, including through provision of required financial and human resources.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China reemphasise that the employment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat is to be fair and transparent and stress that in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Convention, the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. It is imperative to ensure that the Technical Secretariat observe an equitable geographical and balanced gender representation, particularly at the professional level.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the decision of the OPCW-The Hague Award Committee to honour Dr Mahdi Balali-Mood of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Dr Alastair Hay of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as the joint recipients of the second annual OPCW-The Hague Award.

With regard to the future priorities of the Organisation, the NAM CWC States Parties and China believe that the main focus of the Organisation should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons. We will take active part in the discussions to be held in this regard from a constructive position, with a strong belief that all pillars of the Convention would be treated in a balanced manner, including, the ones related to international cooperation, assistance and protection issues, amongst others.

We strongly support dealing comprehensively and holistically with issues related to the future of the Organisation and firmly believe that the discussions need to be brought within the parameters of the policy-making organs (PMOs) guided and driven by States Parties inside

the OPCW with a view to produce binding decisions to be adopted. In this regard, we urge the Conference to request the Executive Council, at its Eighty-First Session, to establish a working group to discuss and formulate a document on the future priorities of the OPCW to be adopted at the Fourth Review Conference. This working group should consult all States Parties to the Convention regarding all aspects of the Convention.

We believe that the process of negotiation in this regard has to be transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory and must reflect the interests and concerns of all States Parties. We stress that States Parties should take the lead in this process and urge that any decision in this regard should be taken by the policy-making organs of the Organisation.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China commend the work of the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Terrorism and the initiation of the work of the sub-working group on non-State actors aimed to formulate concrete recommendations on legal and technical matters within the framework of the Convention.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China are deeply concerned about recent reports on the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals in terrorist attacks and call upon the Technical Secretariat to investigate all reports on the use of chemical weapons and to keep the States Parties informed about steps taken.

With regard to issues of education and outreach, the NAM CWC States Parties and China take note of the ongoing and planned activities on this topic and express support to the activities developed by the Technical Secretariat in this regard. We support the recommendation by the Executive Council on the establishment of an Advisory Board on Education and Outreach and look forward to participating in the discussions on this issue. With regard to the draft decision we emphasise equal geographical distribution and gender-balanced approach should be considered in the appointment of the members of the board.

The NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the continued implementation of the Programme for Africa by the Technical Secretariat and support the development of new actions and projects in order to strengthen the programme.

Thank you.

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