

**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
NIGERIA TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF
CHEMICAL WEAPONS AT THE 108TH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD
FROM 4TH – 7TH MARCH 2025**

Mr. Chairperson,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

It gives me great pleasure to be at the 108th Meeting of the Executive Council. Since I am taking the floor for the first time, I extend warm felicitations to all in the New Year and pledge my delegation's support as we engage for a better and safer tomorrow.

2. The Nigerian delegation acknowledges the resilient and extraordinary work done by the Chairperson of the Executive Council, H.E. Andrés Terán Parral, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the OPCW. Please be rest assured of my delegation's sustained support and cooperation.

3. My delegation commends the Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias for a comprehensive report and extends appreciation to the Technical Secretariat for their commitment towards ensuring the implementation of the organization's mandate.

4. The Nigerian delegation aligns itself with the statement of the African Group delivered by Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa, 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 H.E. Ambassador Ms Mirjam Sow, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr. Chairperson,

5. The 108th Session provides us with another opportunity to deliberate on issues that are central to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Although, all declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been irreversibly destroyed, the world still faces threats from chemical weapons. In this regard, my delegation applauds the work of the Technical Secretariat in reaching out to State Parties yet to accede to the Convention. We believe that it is only through the universality of the Convention that international peace and security can be achieved.

6. My delegation welcomes the emanating positive development on the Syrian situation, especially the recent High-Level visit of the Director General to Damascus, and the constructive engagements with the Syrian Interim President, Ahmad al-Sharaa and caretaker Foreign Minister, Asaad Hassan al-Shaibani. The visit is a clear indication of willingness for sincere and genuine engagement after a protracted impasse on the matter. Furthermore, we commend the role played by the State of Qatar as a revitalising channel for engagements and opening further prospects for cooperation.

7. Indeed, the comprehensive report of the Director General on the progress made in the elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programmes contained in document EC-108/DG.10 is commendable. As we look forward to a resolution of the Syrian dossier in the shortest time possible, we urge all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to grant the Syrian Transitional Government all necessary support towards the fulfilment of its obligations to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Mr. Chairperson,

8. My delegation continues to maintain that if this Organization is to retain its distinguished position as one of the leading disarmament institutions, it must incrementally invest in enhancing the capacity of National Authorities in their implementation effort, especially the developing economies. We call on the Organization to leverage its Mentorship and Partnership programs already instituted to provide States Parties with adequate support in their implementation efforts.

9. My delegation continues to monitor developments in the Africa Programme, as a veritable tool in the implementation of the Convention. We take note of the progress made through the 6th Phase of the Programme and hope that the implementation of the Africa Programme, through the regular budget is given adequate consideration for predictability and hitch-free implementation.

Mr. Chairperson,

10. My delegation supports peaceful uses of chemical technology and the enhancement of International Cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. We believe that international cooperation activities under the OPCW can play a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities of States Parties to fully implement the Convention.

11. We are aware of possibility for the use of toxic chemicals by non-state actors, especially as we witness several centres of armed conflict around the world. To this end, we commend the relentless efforts 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 on mitigating the risk of chemical terrorism. My delegation therefore uses this opportunity to urge the Technical Secretariat to sustain its collaboration with the United Nations in line with Resolution 1540 to strengthen the capacity of relevant institutions such as the police, the military, and public health institutions in all States Parties to prevent possible chemical attacks. Preparing the organisation to anticipate this possibility would be in our best interest.

**Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,**

12. Although the advent of Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies poses new challenges, we believe that immense opportunities however abound. This technological advancement has continued to stimulate scientific research and development because of its complexity, dynamism, and interdisciplinary nature.

13. Nigeria commends the leadership of the Organisation for bringing discussions on AI to the fore burner through useful interactive programmes and activities, aimed at creating awareness and engendering insights into the technological landscape. These actions exemplify proactive approaches to harnessing AI's benefits while addressing its inherent risks. By fostering collaboration among researchers and scientists across Member States, the OPCW is paving the way for innovative solutions that reinforce the Convention's key objectives.

Mr. Chairperson,

14. Our delegation applauds the decision reached by the 29th Conference of States Parties, following the delivery of a non-paper by the African Group on "Irregular Voting Procedure at the OPCW" and that of the Delegation of Guatemala concerning the Procedure for the Election the Executive Council Members of the OPCW. We note that the decision of the General Committee to establish an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) provides the necessary platform for broad discussions on the issue as well as pave the way for issues raised to be addressed.

15. In conclusion, Nigeria calls on all States Parties to reaffirm their unwavering commitment to the Convention and adhere to it, not only as a legal obligation, but a moral imperative in ensuring global peace and security. Through collective resolve, determination and genuine cooperation, we can aspire and ultimately achieve a world free from chemical weapons.

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.

I Thank You.