



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBERS OF THE
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) THAT ARE STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AND CHINA AT THE 108th SESSION OF THE
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE STATES PARTIES
DELIVERED BY
AMBASSADOR MIRJAM BLAAK SOW, AMBASSADOR OF UGANDA TO THE
OPCW, IN HER CAPACITY AS THE CHAIR OF THE NAM + CHINA
OPCW HEADQUARTERS, THE HAGUE
4 – 7 March 2025**

Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China (NAM CWC States Parties and China).

At the outset, we would like to welcome H.E Andrés Terán Parral the Ambassador of the Republic of Ecuador to the Netherlands and Permanent Representative to the OPCW as the Chairperson of the 108th Session of the Executive Council of States Parties and express our confidence in his leadership to steer this session to a successful conclusion.

2. We also wish to thank the Director-General, H.E. Fernando Arias for his comprehensive report. The Group conveys its appreciation to the OPCW staff for their dedication to the implementation of the Organization's noble objectives.
3. The NAM CWC States Parties and China continue to underscore the importance for the OPCW and all States Parties to continue to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention including the economic and technological development of the States Parties, especially in the fields of international cooperation and assistance.
4. The NAM CWC States Parties and China attach great importance to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and in line with the action plan for universality of the Convention (EC-M-23/DEC.3, 2003) and relevant decisions adopted by the OPCW's PMOs, strongly urge the non-parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to it without any further delay or preconditions, and emphasize that those non-parties should not derive any benefit therefrom.

5. 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 this regard, we underline that the existence and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a significant threat to international peace and security. We further underline that full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention contributes to regional and international peace and security.
6. Toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the provisions of the Convention and international law. We also reaffirm that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.
7. We reiterate our grave concern about the reports including, inter alia, by UN Agencies, that the Israeli occupation's forces have used various internationally prohibited weapons including chemical weapons in the course of the 16 months aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the Lebanese people in Lebanon. The NAM CWC State Parties and China are alarmed by the reports of Israel's offensive use of the chemical substance white phosphorus, as a weapon, in its attacks of aggressions against the civilians in Gaza and Lebanon which is causing a serious risk of long-term health hazards. In this context, we are equally alarmed by the possible use of prohibited chemicals, including nerve agents and chemical weapons in its ongoing ground invasion of besieged Gaza and conflict in general. Furthermore, there are serious concerns that the Israeli occupying forces and illegal settlers are using incendiary materials and Riot Control Agents as a method of warfare against Palestinian civilians and their properties during their ongoing attacks including in the context of its full-scale aggression in the West Bank. As such, we are gravely concerned that the Israeli occupation's conduct, including in the latest ongoing aggression, as a signatory, is defeating the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention.
8. We welcome the request of the State of Palestine that was submitted to the Technical Secretariat to monitor and investigate the possible use and threat of use of chemical weapons by the Israeli occupation. The Israeli occupation's actions are clearly prohibited under international law and require vigilance by International Organizations, including the OPCW. The use of chemical weapons anywhere by anyone under any circumstances is unacceptable. Accordingly, we request the Technical Secretariat to take on its duty and monitor the situation in Palestine including any threats or actual use by Israel, of toxic chemicals and provide the Palestinian Government with required technical assistance. We request that the OPCW investigate any possible use of chemical weapons in Israel's aggression against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Furthermore, the Technical Secretariat should remain prepared to take appropriate measures in accordance with the Convention if deemed necessary.
9. We call on Israel to abide by International Law, International Humanitarian Law and the Chemical Weapons Convention, to which it is a signatory party. We also call on Israel to fully and promptly comply with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, 2735(2024), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling, calling for an **immediate** termination of its military occupation and all attacks against Palestinian civilians.

10. The NAM CWC States Parties and China also call on Israel to end its violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to fully withdraw from Lebanese territory without delay.
11. The NAM CWC States Parties and China condemn the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors. Deeply concerned about the use or threat of use by such actors, we request the Technical Secretariat to investigate, by the relevant provisions of the Convention, all reports on the use or threat of use of chemical weapons by such actors and keep the States Parties informed accordingly.
12. The NAM CWC States Parties and China express their deep concern regarding any attempt to accuse States Parties of using chemical weapons and non-compliance with the Convention based on unsubstantiated allegations made by media reports or any other open sources, including non-governmental entities. This trend can cause a dangerous precedent in the future work of the OPCW and must be avoided.
13. In this regard, the NAM CWC States Parties and China underline that the OPCW is the competent international organization to verify the compliance of States Parties with the provisions of the Convention, whose authority and credibility must be upheld at all times.
14. The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress that the destruction of old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons should be completed in the shortest possible time by the Convention and relevant decisions adopted by the PMOs.
15. The NAM CWC States Parties and China note with concern that the overall progress of the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China was less than expected. We urge the Abandoning State Party to continue to make the fullest possible efforts to complete the destruction of the abandoned chemical weapons as early as possible in accordance with the Council's decision (EC-67/DEC.6, dated 15 February 2012) and its annex 3 entitled "Destruction Plan Beyond the Year 2022 for the Chemical Weapons Abandoned by Japan in the People's Republic of China" in a comprehensive, complete and faithful manner, while ensuring the safety of people and protecting the environment.
16. NAM CWC and China welcome the visit of the chairperson of the Council, the Director-General, and the delegation representing the Council to the abandoned chemical weapons sites in China from 18 – 22 September, 2024, acknowledging the need for and the importance of the early elimination of the ACWs for realizing a world free of chemical weapons. We look forward to strengthening supervision by OPCW on the destruction of ACWs.
17. The NAM CWC States Parties and China take note with appreciation the recent visit of the OPCW Director-General on 8 February 2025, to Damascus, which has opened new dialogue with the new Syrian Transitional Government. We also commend The State of Qatar's instrumental role as a revitalizing channel for engagement and opening further prospects for cooperation. These positive steps can set the stage to work together for definitively closing the Syrian chemical weapons file and achieving the Convention's core objectives.
18. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm that Article XI deals with one of the core objectives of the CWC and is essential for the realization of the object and purpose of the Convention. We attach great importance to the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of this Article in a manner which avoids hampering the economic or technological development of States Parties, and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited

under this Convention, including the international exchange of scientific and technical information and chemicals and equipment for the production, processing or use of chemicals for purposes not prohibited under this Convention. We also emphasize the need to strengthen and expedite efforts in the economic and technological development of the States Parties.

19. We also underline the importance of the promotion of international cooperation for the benefit of States Parties through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry and removal of any discriminatory restrictions such as unilateral coercive measures against other States Parties that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention, affect the Convention's long term viability, and have an adverse impact on the existing level of trust among the States Parties.
20. The NAM CWC States Parties and China recognize that the Annual Review and Evaluation Workshop for the Components of an Agreed Framework for the Implementation of Article XI is a useful platform to develop concrete measures and recommendations to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of this Article. In this regard, we request the Article XI Facilitator to report on the ideas that have emerged from workshops and other relevant activities held during the intersessional period, to be reflected in the report of the PMOs. We also request the Secretariat to provide a comprehensive report on the gaps and challenges in the effective implementation of decision C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011 which is still applicable.
21. We appreciate the efforts made so far by the Article XI Facilitator and encourage the continuation of inclusive outreach and constructive dialogue with all States Parties. We welcome the list of ideas that emerged from the above-mentioned review and evaluation workshops. We suggest to present it to the PMO for its consideration and possible approval.
22. We reiterate that a comprehensive discussion in the PMOs on the implementation of the decision C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011 is the effective way to formulate an OPCW strategy for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI. In this regard, we strongly call on all States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to take into consideration also the NAM & China proposals (C-12/NAT.1, dated 6 November 2007) on the implementation of Article XI of the Convention, including the Plan of Action.
23. The NAM CWC States Parties and China emphasize the imperative of the PMOs of the OPCW to preserve permanently and allocate substantial financial, technical and human resources in the realization of international cooperation activities in States Parties in the developing countries, considering national and regional needs, realities and challenges, including language barriers.
24. The NAM CWC States Parties and China have taken note of the transfer of funds between programmes and within sub-programmes in past years signed since the 4th Review Conference. In this regard, we express deep concern that considerable amounts have been transferred out of the International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) Programme since 2018. The NAM CWC States Parties and China wish to re-emphasize that the ICA is one of the core pillars of the CWC, and it is essential that a balanced approach towards allocation of funds to all programmes, including in particular ICA to be pursued by the Technical Secretariat so that the implementation of this programme be sustained.

25. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterates its call on the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to work collectively with a view to achieving the full and effective implementation of the ICA programmes. This would include ensuring that the relevant budgetary requirements are effectively balanced and programmes delivery is promptly executed, in particular for developing countries. This is to avoid or to reduce the need for transfers between major programmes. We also ask for establishing a special fund for ICA activities that could be financed with different sources, including the retention of unspent funds for ICA and possible allocation of resources from cash surplus as applied for other special funds. We look forward to the full implementation of the above recommendation and remain ready to be engaged in any further consultations on this matter.
26. The NAM CWC State Parties and China take note of the progress of the Sixth Phase of the OPCW Programme to strengthen cooperation with Africa and the implementation of its previous phases. To guarantee its sustainability and predictability, the Group supports the funding of future phases of this programme under the regular budget of the OPCW.
27. The NAM CWC States Parties and China support the strengthening of capacity building of the States Parties through scaling up of international cooperation and assistance programs and fostering scientific and academic partnerships in the field of chemical activities for peaceful purposes by the recently established ChemTech Centre. We expect the Centre to continue building the expertise of the Technical Secretariat to fulfil its mandate under the Convention, including further providing technical assistance to State Parties for its full and effective implementation. We urge that the modalities, mandate, operational needs and budgetary allocation of the Centre should be drawn up in full consultation with the States Parties and submitted for approval of States Parties through the PMOs. We also stress the importance of transparency and efficiency in all the work and programs of the Centre.
28. The NAM CWC States Parties and China welcome the designation of the Algerian National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology(NICC) as a new OPCW Designated Laboratory in Africa. We recognize that there is one designated laboratory so far, each in Africa and GRULAC. We underscore the importance of obtaining more designated laboratories in all regions and encourage the OPCW to actively support the capacity-building efforts of States Parties to achieve this objective.
29. The NAM States Parties and China welcome with appreciation that the Algerian Institute (NICC) and the Indian Chemical Council have been co-recipients of the prestigious OPCW- the Hague Award for 2024. It is a recognition of the two institutions' efforts in contributing to achieving the CWC goals for a World Free of Chemical weapons.
30. The NAM CWC States Parties and China stress the need for all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X. We urge 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.
31. The NAM CWC States Parties and China pay profound respect to victims of chemical weapons and their families, and 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 for their contribution to the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons and urge all the States Parties to actively contribute to the Trust Fund. We underline that insufficient contribution to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance will considerably limit the capacity of the OPCW to provide the essential medicines and necessary medical assistance to the victims of chemical weapons.

32. Recalling the “International Symposium on Medical Treatment of Chemical Warfare Victims: Challenges and Hopes”, which took place on 28-29 June 2018, in the Hague, the NAM CWC States Parties and China request to hold such Symposiums regularly in order to establish an International Network composed of scientists, clinicians, experts, academia and civil society with the aim to evaluate the short and long-term effects of chemical weapons on victims and make recommendations accordingly. We also call upon the Director-General to encourage the Scientific Advisory Board(SAB) to further discuss the Symposium’s objectives, and integrate assistance for the victims of chemical weapons into the programs and activities of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology.
33. Bis The NAM CWC States Parties and China note with appreciation an International Training Course on the Medical Aspects of Assistance and Protection against Chemical Weapons was co-organized by the Chinese Government and the Technical Secretariat, in Xi’an, China, from 14 to 18 October 2024.
34. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate their concern for victims of chemical weapons, which require specific and urgent assistance of the States Parties, particularly those in a position to do so and call on the Organization to give top priority to them in the next five years. In this regard, the expertise of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) could play an important role.
35. NAM CWC States Parties and China underline the responsibility of the States Parties and Technical Secretariat of the OPCW to assist the victims of chemical weapons and to coordinate and deliver to them the needed equipment, materials and medicines, in accordance with Article X. We are of the view that any restrictions, including unilateral measures, imposed by some States Parties against other States Parties, which impede assistance to the victims of chemical weapons, are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention.
36. NAM CWC States Parties and China urge States Parties to take concrete measures, including, inter alia, by providing materials and equipment-related assistance available to those States Parties which are in need, without any restriction. In this regard, we welcome the efforts by the Director-General for his good offices to facilitate assistance to the victims of chemical weapons. In order to reach a positive outcome on this matter, we encourage the Director-General to continue and intensify his efforts and inform the EC about the latest developments on the subject.
37. The NAM CWC States Parties and China encourage States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to continue providing appropriate, effective and tailor-made technical assistance and support to States Parties in enhancing their national capacities and in carrying out their national implementation measures in the context of Article VII and provide the necessary financial support to do so. We firmly believe that Article VII obligations necessitate full and effective measures by all States Parties to implement all provisions of the Convention and encourage them to continue working towards this end.
38. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the recruitment of personnel in the Technical Secretariat must be fair, transparent and must ensure equitable geographic distribution, as mandated by Article VIII, paragraph 44, of the Convention, and gender balance at all professional levels of the Organization. We emphasize that any amendment to the tenure policy shall not change the non-career nature of this Organization. Furthermore, we call upon the Secretariat to devise as soon as possible appropriate modalities of a funded internship and Junior Professional Officer Programme, which will enable candidates from developing States Parties, to have equitable access to professional positions in the Technical Secretariat.

39. The NAM CWC States Parties and China urge the Technical Secretariat and States Parties to embody in the organizational governance, required policy, programs and structural necessities to contribute to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the CWC in particular Article X and XI, while preserving the OPCW's experiences, expertise and organizational governance on the destruction/elimination of chemical weapons and to further strengthen the CWC in its entirety, taking into account the CWC as a unique multilateral negotiated disarmament instrument and ensuring the OPCW relevance.
40. Given the fact that the use of chemical weapons would have a disproportionate impact on women and girls and bearing in mind that the original object of the CWC is to safeguard humankind from the threat of CWCs use, the NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the OPCW shall ensure that the identification and addressing the direct and indirect impacts of the chemical weapons on women and girls are effectively embedded in its programs and activities.
41. The NAM CWC States Parties and China take note with appreciation the continuing efforts to promote gender equity within the OPCW and call for enhanced cooperation to promote the role of women and girls in the peaceful use of chemistry. We look forward to the continuation of efforts to engage and represent women from all geographical regions to promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention.
42. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate that the discussions on the Draft Decision on the OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters Rules of Procedure (ABAF) should be conducted in an open and inclusive manner, while preserving its independence and avoiding issues that may lead to its politicization and polarization. Bearing in mind that the ABAF is an open-ended body without decision-making powers, the NAM CWC States Parties and China hold the view that every State Party has the right to nominate experts it deems qualified and appropriate as a member of the ABAF. We consider that the broad geographical distribution and composition of experts with diversified backgrounds will benefit the functioning of the ABAF.
43. NAM States Parties to the CWC and China call for efforts to address the issue of Aerosolized Use of Central Nervous System (CNS)-acting chemicals for law-enforcement purposes that was adopted by vote at 26th CSP through dialogue and consensus, which is important, comprehensively and constructively, to be considered by the Chemical Weapons Convention.
44. The NAM CWC States Parties and China are of the firm belief that peace, security and economic and social development are indivisible. Moreover, as the elimination of the declared chemical weapons has been completed following the extended deadline, it is highly pertinent and timely to emphasize the importance of the chemical industry's role in the sustained growth and development of the States Parties in particular developing parties. Hence, the NAM CWC States Parties and China reiterate their stance on the necessity of further recognition and addressing the promotion of trade and international cooperation in the field of peaceful application of chemistry as one of the main priorities and functions of the OPCW.
45. The NAM CWC State Parties and China take note of the Technical Secretariat's note (S/2360/2025 dated 29 January 2025) on the OPCW first Global Conference on the Role of AI held in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, from 22 to 24 October 2024, which informs about the Conference's valuable conclusions and the current and future discussion and initiatives within the OPCW. This pioneering conference constitutes a reference for a better understanding of the Role of AI in the implementation

of the Convention to address the evolving risks and threats posed by AI enabled technologies in the fields of chemical security and chemical disarmament.

46. The NAM CWC States Parties and China request the Technical Secretariat to further enhance its activities in the field of education and outreach to chemical industries of the developing States Parties and put in place a needs assessment mechanism to promote international cooperation in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes in a more tailored and efficient way.
47. The NAM CWC States Parties and China commend the Technical Secretariat activities on e-learning modules and encourage the Technical Secretariat to continue improving these modules and foster more cooperation with relevant stakeholders in the field of assistance and protection.
48. The NAM CWC States Parties and China reaffirm their commitments to make every effort to reach consensus on all decision-making processes. However, if consensus, is not-possible we call on the Technical Secretariat and all States Parties to strictly apply the rules of procedures established for the voting and election process.

In conclusion Chairperson,

49. The NAM CWC States Parties and China acknowledge the Conference's request to the General Committee to define and establish an appropriate and inclusive framework for deliberations concerning the implementation of the rules governing the election of Executive Council members, with the support of the Office of the Legal Adviser. Accordingly, the Group welcomes the General Committee's decision to establish an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to examine the current application of these election rules. Furthermore, the Group takes note of the decision to appoint the Chairperson of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) as the Chair of the OEWG, with the understanding that the General Committee's role in this process shall be to receive progress reports from the OEWG Chairperson, as well as the final report and recommendations of the OEWG, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of document C-29/5, dated 29 November 2024.