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INDIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PRADEEP KUMAR RAWAT
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

First, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Abdelouahab Bellouki, on your assumption of responsibilities as Chairperson of the Executive Council. I would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

I would like to thank and appreciate the Director-General for the detailed report on the various activities of the Organisation. My delegation commends the Director-General, Mr Chairperson, and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts towards safeguarding the health of all delegates and the staff members of the Technical Secretariat. We are confident that the proceedings of this session will be a success.

India associates itself with 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 Representation of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, Ambassador Fikrat Akhundov.

India views the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) as a unique, non-discriminatory disarmament instrument which serves as a model for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. India therefore attaches high importance to the Convention, and stands for its full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation. We hope that the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles would be completed as early as possible.

We note the reports of the Director-General on the progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, as well as the monthly reports on the activities related to the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and their production facilities submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic during the intersessional period. We urge continued and effective engagement between the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic and hope that all issues will be resolved through dialogue and cooperation.

Let me reiterate that India remains firmly opposed to the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone. It has been India’s consistent position that it is important that any investigation on the alleged use of chemical weapons must be conducted in strict compliance of the provisions and procedures laid down in the Convention.



We welcome the efforts of the co-facilitators on organisational governance issues, Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus of Australia, and Ambassador Laura Dupuy Lasserre of Uruguay to continue discussions and consultations on a draft decision on amendment of the OPCW tenure policy. We urge States Parties and the co-facilitators to continue consultations on all organisational governance issues. I assure my delegation's full cooperation to the work undertaken by the co-facilitators.

We also urge for early convening of meetings to achieving further progress to advance the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention, as outlined in the 4 October 2019 position paper of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Convention and China.

India supports full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention, including the economic and technological development of the States Parties and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the convention.

Mr Chairperson, I conclude with the request that this Statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the external server and the public website of the OPCW.

Thank you.

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