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ETHIOPIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HIRUT ZEMENE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE OPCW AT THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL
WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

My delegation would like to congratulate you for your election as a Chairperson of the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference) and commend you for the manner you are steering our deliberations.

Ethiopia aligns itself with the political declarations as stated in the provisional text and statements of the Africa Group by Ghana and the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapon Convention and China by Azerbaijan.

We also would like to congratulate the Director-General, the secretariat, and all Member States on the inauguration of the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology on 12 May 2023. Ethiopia notes with appreciation the significance of the centre, among others, in encouraging the capacity building of States Parties through the scaling up of international cooperation and assistance in the field.

My delegation extends its appreciation for the comprehensive report delivered by the Executive Council. We also commend the work of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Fifth Review Conference led by Estonia. Furthermore, we wish to thank the Director-General, H.E. Fernando Arias and the Chairperson of the Fifth Review Conference for their opening remarks.

Ethiopia highly values the efforts of the OPCW to strengthen cooperation through capacity building with Africa based on the spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). My delegation welcomes the focus given by the Open-Ended Working Group on the consistency and reliable sources of financing in promoting international cooperation and assistance programmes which need to be supported through sustainable sources of financing that must be a regular budget of OPCW. In this regard, capacity-building programmes in terms of early warning, protection, and the peaceful use of chemicals need to be given a stronger emphasis for countries in need including Ethiopia. We would like also to stress the importance



of augmenting testing capabilities by supporting the creation of laboratories for States in need including Ethiopia.

We attach great importance to all provisions of Article XI in a manner that avoids hindering the economic or technological development of the States Parties and their international cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of chemical activities on a non-discriminatory basis. This Convention includes the international exchanges of scientific and technical information, chemicals, and equipment for the manufacture, processing, or use of chemicals for purposes not prohibited by this Convention.

We also would like to emphasise—based on the spirit of the Convention—the importance of promoting international cooperation for State Parties’ interests through the transfer of technology and equipment for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry.

We appreciate State Parties highlighting the sixth phase of the OPCW programme to strengthen cooperation with Africa and the implementation of the previous phases as well as funding of future phases of this programme under the regular OPCW budget.

As a victim of the horrifying attack by chemical weapons in the 1930s, my country strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals, as weapons anywhere by anyone under any circumstances that constitute a serious violation of international law and particularly under the provisions of the Convention.

Ethiopia commends the Chairperson’s suggestion on gender balance and equitable geographical representation of staff at the Technical Secretariat. In this regard, Ethiopia allies itself with the Africa Group in emphasising that the implementation of such steps will address the underrepresentation of the Africa Group in the Secretariat.

My delegation welcomes the ongoing support instituted by the Secretariat to develop the capacity of National Authorities for effective implementation of the Convention within the context of the national implementation framework. In this regard, we would like to recall that Ethiopia adopted comprehensive national implementation legislation in 2003. It has implemented major provisions of the Convention and has been submitting annual national declarations to the OPCW.

In closing, Mr Chairperson, I would like to conclude my statement by reiterating Ethiopia’s strong commitment to fully implement the Convention.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of the Fifth Review Conference and posted on the OPCW external server and the public website.

Thank you.

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