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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR MOAZZAM AHMAD KHAN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OPCW TO PAKISTAN
AT THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

At the outset, let me convey to you my warm felicitations on your election as Chairperson of the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. You bring to this Conference extensive experience and skills which I am confident will guide this session to a successful conclusion. In this endeavour, please rest assured of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I would also like to convey our appreciation to the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa, for leading the Seventeenth Session of the Conference in a most effective and admirable manner.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for his comprehensive and detailed report on the activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and to express appreciation for the leadership he has provided and the efforts he has made in guiding this Organisation through its most challenging times.

My delegation wholeheartedly supports the re-appointment of the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, for a second term and assures him of our full cooperation as he continues to provide effective leadership to this Organisation helping it realise its fundamental objectives.

The decision by the Nobel Peace Committee to bestow this year's Peace Prize on the OPCW is a great honour for the Organisation and all State Parties. This honour is recognition of the extensive efforts made by the OPCW to eliminate chemical weapons from the world. We are sure that the Organisation, under the able leadership of the Director-General, will continue to make every effort to achieve the ultimate objective of total elimination of chemical weapons for making the world a better and safer place.

While we fully associate ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China by H.E. S. A. Aragchi, Deputy Minister for International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to share Pakistan's views on issues that we believe are critical for the future of the OPCW and require our close and serious attention.



Pakistan has repeatedly condemned the use of chemical weapons in Syria and the killing of so many innocent civilians. Pakistan remains opposed to the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances, and finds it totally unacceptable.

We welcome Syria's decision to join the Convention and to declare all its stockpiles and production facilities. We hope that the Syrian authorities would continue to fully cooperate with the OPCW in dismantling their chemical weapons and production facilities, as stipulated under the Executive Council's decision and the resolution of the United Nations Security Council.

Pakistan regards the Convention as a comprehensive and non-discriminatory disarmament instrument, and it strongly believes that it is worth every effort to preserve and strengthen this regime. Its existence and near universal acceptance raise hopes that a day might come when all disarmament goals will be pursued in the same manner and that the entitlement to equal security will be restored to all.

We can take satisfaction from the fact that the Convention is now supported politically and legally by 190 countries of the world, who are its States Parties. And here we would once again like to welcome the accession of Somalia to the Convention. However, the complete elimination of the threat of the use of chemical weapons would remain far from reality until all the remaining non-State Parties accede to the Convention. Acceptance of the Convention by 99% of the global population is a significant milestone, but complete universality of the Convention is highly desirable, in fact critical, to ensure the safety and security of the world against the threat of chemical weapons. We therefore, once again, call upon these States to join the Convention without further delay.

The Chemical Weapons Convention has now completed sixteen years as a functioning and effective international treaty. We believe that the destruction of chemical weapons worldwide is the key objective of this Organisation. We urge the possessor States to continue the destruction process in accordance with the relevant decision of the Conference and within the time frame announced by them.

We believe that the balance of rights and obligations in the Convention represents a carefully managed consensus. Despite the Convention being the most successful disarmament treaty, there is work to be done in several areas.

Domestic implementation of the Convention's obligations has been a subject of increasing attention for reasons of legitimate merit. We, however, take an objective and sympathetic view of this issue, especially since most of the countries that have not been able to fulfil the requirements of the Convention are developing countries faced with competing challenges and lack of necessary resources. We consider the initiatives taken by the Director-General in this regard as encouraging.

Pakistan takes its responsibility to implement the Convention very seriously. This is evident from our national legislation that covers not only the Convention, but also our related international obligations. Pakistan has fulfilled its national obligations on the Convention implementation measures. We are amongst the leading countries that have already promulgated national legislation through Presidential Ordinance in 2000. Our National Authority (NA) is fully involved in all issues related to the Convention.

We are also one of the first countries to show our concrete support to the National Authority Mentorship Programme, and are closely assisting another State Party in preparing necessary domestic legislation as required by the Convention. We hope to continue this effort with other regional States which may require our support.

My delegation attaches high priority to the provisions of the Convention on international cooperation and assistance. Pakistan believes that the implementation of the Convention should be carried out in such a way that the economic and technological activities of the States Parties, not prohibited under the Convention, are not adversely affected. Pakistan fully supports the goal of enhanced international cooperation in economic and scientific fields.

We believe that investment in this field will renew the interest of a large number of States Parties in the Convention in the years ahead. Similarly, only a better implementation of obligations under the Convention to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and technical information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes, will serve the long-term objective of the Convention. There is a need for allocation of adequate financial and human resources for the implementation of Article XI related programmes and initiatives within the Technical Secretariat. It is important to follow up the recommendations of the Third Review Conference regarding implementation of Article XI.

We urge all the States Parties to facilitate exchange of chemicals, equipment and technical information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes.

Pakistan ardently supports all activities and initiatives of the OPCW under Article X. Besides holding international basic assistance and protection courses in Pakistan, in late 2011, we took the initiative to develop a subregional assistance and protection centre in light of the concept floated by the OPCW, to meet the essential needs of the region. Our initiative has been supported by the Organisation and a number of regional State Parties, and we are grateful for their support. The establishment of this centre in Islamabad was announced during the Third Review Conference.

Recently, the Government of Pakistan and the OPCW have jointly organised the Third International Course on Assistance and Protection against Chemical Weapons. The objective of this course was to impart training in the use of protective equipment, and in monitoring, detection and decontamination techniques. It was attended by 14 OPCW-sponsored participants from 14 States Parties as well as seven participants from Pakistan.

Mr Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would once again like to reaffirm Pakistan's unwavering support for the core objectives of the Convention and the work of the OPCW.

I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.