



**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF INDIA
AT THE 108th SESSION OF THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
04-07 March 2025**

***Statement by H.E. Ambassador Kumar Tuhin, Permanent
Representative of the Republic of India to the OPCW at the 108th
Session of the Executive Council under Agenda Item 5: General Debate***

**Chairperson,
Director-General &
Distinguished delegates,**

The Indian delegation thanks His Excellency Andrés Terán Parral, Ambassador of Ecuador, for his chairmanship of the 108th session of the Executive Council. We look forward to having a very fruitful and productive session under your able leadership.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Technical Secretariat, led by Director-General Fernando Arias, for its commitment towards supporting the effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Distinguished delegates,

India attaches great importance to the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. As an original signatory, we support all efforts to achieve its universality and urge the States that are not Parties, to join the Convention at the earliest.

While the destruction of all declared chemical weapon stockpiles was an important achievement for OPCW, we must remain vigilant and collectively strive to prevent their re-emergence. Universal adherence to the Convention should, therefore, remain an utmost priority for the OPCW.

Distinguished delegates,

India is of the view that full and effective national implementation of the Convention by States Parties, in line with Article VII of the Convention is important to address emerging challenges such as the discovery of new toxic chemicals, technological advancements in the deployment of chemical weapons and threats posed by non-State actors.

India believes that, as a confidence-building measure, Article VI inspections should continue to be implemented in a manner which does not hamper the economic and technological development of States Parties. However, we need to adapt the verification and inspection regime, in light of the growing chemical industry and rapid advancements in science and technology. India has been engaging pro-actively towards achieving this goal, including in the ongoing discussions between States Parties and the Technical Secretariat through the Industry Cluster with the aim to reduce the current backlog of Schedule 2 inspections. The methodology under discussion regarding Schedule 2 plant site risk assessment and reinspection frequencies may only be reviewed in line with the Convention and with the consensus of States Parties. Any change in the Risk Assessment Methodology for Article VI inspections must be aligned with the Preamble and provisions of Article XI of the Convention to promote and enhance the economic and technological development of all States Parties. Any methodology that gives an advantage to the capital intensive, large automated facilities over smaller multipurpose facilities would likely hamper and subdue economic and technological development in emerging economies. India is happy to note that the Article VI inspections shall return to the pre-pandemic number of 241 inspections annually in 2026. India strongly believes that the Article VI inspections will continue to uphold the object and purpose of the Convention.

India remains firmly opposed to any use or threat of use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody and under any circumstances. We reiterate the need for an impartial and objective

investigation into any use of chemical weapons by the OPCW to establish the facts and reach evidence-based conclusions. However, this should be done strictly as per the provisions of the Convention, while respecting the delicate balance of power and responsibilities enshrined under it.

India has consistently encouraged engagement by the Technical Secretariat with Syrian authorities to resolve all outstanding issues. We take note of the recent visit undertaken by Director General and his team to Syria. We hope that the constructive efforts of OPCW and the international community can lead to effective implementation of CWC.

India believes that international cooperation activities under the OPCW can play a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities of States Parties to fully implement the Convention. We were happy to make additional contributions to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance under Article X of the Convention, recently.

India strongly supports International Cooperation among States Parties and promotion of peaceful uses of chemistry within the framework of the Convention. Indian Institute of Chemical Technology collaborated with the Technical Secretariat for conducting Analytical Skills Development Course during 2018-2024. These trainings benefitted 126 participants from 50 States Parties. From 2025, the Institute of Pesticides Formulation Technology (IPFT), Gurgaon is collaborating with the TS, OPCW for conducting the Analytical Skills Development Course. India regularly partners with OPCW by providing training under the industry segment of Associate Programmes. We recently concluded the Mentorship/Partnership Programme of OPCW with Kenya. Based on the positive feedback, India will be happy to offer its expertise to other interested States Parties under the Mentorship/Partnership Programme for the year 2025.

The establishment of the ChemTech Centre is an important step towards enhancing OPCW's research, analytical and capacity-building capabilities. It also provides an excellent opportunity for knowledge sharing and scientific & technological collaboration with a wide network of stakeholders, including research institutions, academia, government authorities and chemical industry. India stands ready to partner in this effort and contribute to the ChemTech Centre's activities.

Distinguished delegates,

AI is developing at an unprecedented scale and speed, and being adopted and deployed even faster. It is already re-shaping our polity, our economy, our security and even our society. Therefore, there is a need for collective global efforts to establish governance and standards, that uphold our shared values, address risks, and build trust. Against this backdrop, India recently co-chaired the *AI Action Summit* with France, where a range of issues were deliberated. India takes note of the focus of the Technical Secretariat to share insights into the developments in AI and its impact on the implementation of the Convention. Our delegation believes that there is a need for a holistic approach and thorough assessment of how use of AI align with and impact the objectives and purposes of the Convention, considering both their benefits and challenges. India is ready to actively participate in the discussions on this matter.

Before I conclude, let me reiterate the importance of consensus building in the functioning of the OPCW and the need for all States Parties to work together for a world free of chemical weapons and take all decisions in a spirit of cooperation. My delegation would also emphasize the importance of due consultations and ensuring that views of all member states are taken on board on all issues impacting the present and future work of the OPCW.

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

Thank you!
