

**PHILIPPINES: Statement by H.E. Ambassador J. Eduardo Malaya, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the OPCW, at the 108th Session of the Executive Council under Agenda Item No. 5: General Debate
4-7 March 2025**

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation would like to thank H.E. Ambassador Andrés Teran Parral of Ecuador for his able leadership and commitment as the Chair of the Executive Council. We also extend our sincere gratitude to Director-General Fernando Arias and his staff at the Technical Secretariat, and reiterate our confidence in their expertise and professionalism, with the assurance of our continued support.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Philippines attaches great importance to the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention and role of Organization and its Member States in fulfilling the Convention's mandate to end the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons; and to prevent their re-emergence; and, in so doing, making the world safe from the threat of chemical weapons.

It is in this vein that this year, the Philippines aims to solidify its compliance with the Convention, and further deepen its engagements with the Organization by supporting its programs and activities.

Beyond disarmament, the Philippines appreciates the work of the Organization in the area of capacity building, assistance and protection, and promotion of the safe and peaceful uses of chemistry. We believe that capacity building must remain a key element in the work of the OPCW. With that, we are pleased to inform this Session that the Philippine National Authority is co-organizing with the Assistance and Protection Branch a training in Manila for first responders, scheduled June this year.

Mr. Chairperson,

With the inclusion of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on the agenda of the regular sessions of the EC, my Delegation highlights the importance and critical role of the Scientific Advisory Board in rendering experts' advice to the Technical Secretariat, the Executive Council and the Conference on developments in science and technology; thereby ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention, notably the non-proliferation of chemical weapons and the promotion of safe and peaceful uses of chemistry.

The Philippines thus proudly welcomes the assumption this year of Dr. Imee Su Martinez as Chairperson of the Scientific Advisory Board, the first Filipino to assume the position.

And to further support the work of the SAB, the Philippines will make a voluntary contribution to the SAB Trust Fund for its activities including that of its Temporary Working Groups.

Mr. Chairperson,

My Delegation is pleased to also inform this Session that the Chemical Weapons Prohibitions Bill has passed both Houses of the Philippine Congress and currently for enrolment and endorsement by the Senate to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for signature. The text of the bill had the benefit of prior consultations with Secretariat.

With this significant development, allow me to affirm that the commitment of the Philippines to the Convention remains steadfast and we will continue to work and support measures which aim to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of its provisions, essential to the enhancement of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Philippines welcomes the recent dramatic developments in Syria and is hopeful that the process of reconciliation among its people will continue in order to bring the benefits of peace and development to all sectors. We also welcome the recent visit of the Director General to Syria together with the high-level delegation from the OPCW which laid the ground work towards a closer and robust cooperation in closing Syria's chemical weapons dossier. We have full faith and confidence in the professionalism and technical expertise of the Secretariat in undertaking its mandate, and we are optimistic of tangible results in this new chapter of engagements with Syria. The Philippines conveys its support for the work ahead including the 9-point action plan for Syria.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Philippines remains committed to the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our country believes that only with the collective commitment of all countries-more so all States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention-towards international peace and stability can we all pursue sustainable growth and development. As such, the crucial role that the OPCW plays in ensuring that chemicals are not used as weapons against anyone, anywhere, anytime and for any reason remains of paramount importance.

I request that this statement be made an official document of the One-Hundred Eight Session of the Executive Council and posted in the OPCW website.