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THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AHMED BAMARNI
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COOPERATION IN THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BAGHDAD
AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellency, the Director-General of OPCW,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to extend to you, Mr Chairperson, and to your Vice-Chairpersons our congratulations on your election as Chairperson of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are confident that your diplomatic experience and knowledge will lead the proceedings of the Conference to a successful outcome. I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Paul Arkwright of the United Kingdom for the efforts he made during his term of office as Chairperson of the last Session of the Conference. At the same time, I would like to welcome Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, the Director-General of the OPCW.

My country's delegation endorses the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China by its current Chairperson Mr Akhundzadeh, Deputy Foreign Minister for International Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the ambassadors of the Asian region to the OPCW, in particular Ambassador Fauzia Sana of Pakistan, the Coordinator of the Asian region, for supporting the re-election of Iraq as Vice-Chairperson of the Conference of the States Parties, and member of the Credentials Committee for this session, and also their supporting of the election of Iraq for chairing the Committee of the Whole for the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention to be held in April 2013.

The people of Iraq, more than the people of any other State, have suffered during the last decades from the use of chemical weapons, a situation which manifests itself in Halabja. The present generations are still enduring the consequences of these weapons. Bearing this in mind, paragraph (e) of Article (9) of the Iraqi Constitution for 2005 provides:

“The Iraqi Government shall respect and implement Iraq's international obligations regarding the non-proliferation, non-development, non-production, and non-use of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and shall prohibit



associated equipment, material, technologies, and delivery systems for use in the development, manufacture, production, and use of such weapons”.

The Government of my country is committed to the international treaties and conventions in the field of disarmament in general, and to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in particular. It also supports the International Treaty on the Non-Proliferation, the disarmament treaties and the relevant international conventions. Iraq stands by all international efforts and initiatives aiming at combating terrorism. In this regard, I would like to inform you of a number of achievements and activities accomplished by the Government of my country during the last period:

- The Council of Representatives ratified on 15 January 2011 the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.
- The Council of Representatives ratified on 28 June 2012 the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.
- The Council of Representatives ratified on 9 October 2012 the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
- The Council of Representatives ratified on 16 February 2012 the “National Monitoring Directorate Law for the Prohibition of Chemical, Nuclear and Biological Weapons”, which is considered as one of the fundamental pillars of the implementation of Article VII of the Convention. A copy of this law has been submitted to the International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Office of the Legal Advisor in the OPCW and Mr Santiago Oñate Laborde, for their cooperation with our delegation in the review of the said national laws.
- The Council of Representatives ratified on 15 October 2012 the Convention of Cluster Munitions.
- The Council of Representatives completed the first reading of the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which will hopefully be voted soon.
- Progress has been made in liquidation of Al-Muthanna (MSE) cancelled facility for the disposal of the existing chemical remnants. This has been reflected in the recent briefing given by Iraq at the Seventieth Session of the Executive Council. It represents, in fact, a proof of the commitment of the Government of my country towards the implementation of its obligations under the Convention, in particular in the implementation of the activities in accordance with the roadmap drawn up by the Iraqi technical authorities in cooperation with the Technical Secretariat and a number of Member States with a view to adopting the final destruction plan to be submitted to the Technical Secretariat and the Executive Council, as soon as possible. In this context, I reiterate that the scale of progress in the Iraqi’s dossier certainly depends on the assistance and support provided by the Member States, including the provision of instruments, equipments and training.
- The Iraqi Government has submitted a request to the OPCW Technical Secretariat as well as a detailed plan for the conversion of Al Rashad facility for purposes non-prohibited under the Convention (in accordance with Part V (D), paragraph 73 of the Verification Annex to the Convention). In this context, the Iraqi authorities received the inspection team of the OPCW Technical Secretariat in Baghdad from 6 to 8 November 2012. The inspection team visited Al Rashad facility in order to verify consistency with the declaration and request submitted by Iraq. The inspection team members expressed their thanks for the positive cooperation and assistance

provided by the Iraqi side, which in turn, commended the high competence, professionalism, and cooperation displayed by the inspection team. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the OPCW Technical Secretariat for the fruitful cooperation in this respect.

- The Iraqi Government agreed to establish a new directorate, within the Ministry of Science and Technology, for the processing and destruction of dangerous chemical, biological and warfare remnants. The new directorate will, among other things, destroy and process the remnants of war, including ammunitions, munitions, landmines, equipment and special weapons. It is a right step towards establishing an official competent authority in Iraq to conduct this vital activity, which would ensure ridding society and the environment of the threats of other chemical, biological and military pollutants.
- Technical discussions are ongoing with the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Member States who expressed their willingness to help Iraq. A Memorandum of Understanding was concluded between Iraq and the United Kingdom on the training of Iraqi technical personnel. This training was successfully completed in Britain last October. Allow me in this respect to extend my thanks to the British authorities. Likewise, a Memorandum of Understanding was also concluded between Iraq and the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the provision of an integrated, mobile system for the assessment of gases inside the aforementioned bunkers. This constitutes an extremely important stage for Iraq in the preparation of the final destruction plan, in view of the outcome of gas analyses and assessment conducted at the two bunkers with the use of the German system. I wish also to mention the continuous cooperation with the United States of America in the provision of two trainings for Iraqi technical staff, as well as the continuous cooperation with Russian, Swiss, Indian and Polish partners. We thank all these countries for their interest, efforts and serious willingness to cooperate with Iraq.
- Iraq's regional role is increasing, as crystallised in its hosting of important international meetings, like the 23rd session of the Arab Summit late March, and consent by the group of the P5+1 and our neighbouring country Iran to hold their important meetings last May in Baghdad.

Mr Chairperson,

Preparations have already started for the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is a matter of urgency to make progress towards the implementation of obligations contained in the action plans adopted by the 2010 Review Conference, particularly Part IV of the final document on the Middle East, which reflects consensus by the international community over the convening of a conference dedicated to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The Iraqi Government is aware that the establishment of such a zone would serve multiple purposes, given the paramount importance of this region in consolidating the non-proliferation regime, and fostering the security of States in the Middle East. In addition, this project is one of the important confidence-building measures in the region, and therefore it is necessary to make every effort to hold that conference, in view of its multiple benefits and objectives that would positively impact security and stability in the region and bring us closer to the supreme goal of achieving and maintaining international peace and security.

In relation to the themes of the conference, I assure you of my delegation's support to the efforts made towards achieving the universality of the Convention. This constitutes an important step towards the achievement of OPCW future priorities to make the Convention an instrument for the international community to exclude completely the possibility of the development, production, use, stockpiling, or transfer of these dreadful weapons. Also in the context of OPCW future priorities, we reaffirm our conviction that the OPCW shall continue to operate even after the complete disposal of all chemical weapons, in light of its successful achievements in disarmament, including disposal of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under strict international verification.

As part of the preparations for the Third Review Conference, I would like on behalf of my delegation to express our thanks and support to Ms Nassima Baghli, Ambassador of Algeria, for her valuable efforts. We reaffirm our full readiness to work and agree with the delegations of the Member States on all paragraphs to be contained in the initial report to be issued by the working group in mid-December. Iraq is confident that the resolutions of the Third Review Conference will be important in shaping the future of the OPCW.

In the same vein, we would like to refer to the international meeting on the security and safety of chemicals, which was held in November, in Poland, and we wish to thank the Polish Government and Mr Krzysztof Paturej, Director of Special Projects at OPCW, and chairperson of the aforementioned meeting, wishing him every success in his future endeavours.

Mr Chairperson,

Finally, I reaffirm the commitment and keenness of the Iraqi Government to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat and Member States towards fulfilling the objectives for which the Convention was established, with a view to achieving a world free of chemical weapons and all weapons of mass destruction to bring about international peace and security.

I wish to request that this statement be adopted as one of the official documents of this session.

Thank you.

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