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STATE OF QATAR

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR MUTLAQ BIN MAJED AL-QAHTANI
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DEPARTMENT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BEFORE THE EIGHTEENTH
SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, members of delegation,

At the outset, allow me, Mr Chairperson, to congratulate you, on behalf of the delegation of the State of Qatar, on your election as Chairperson of the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. I also wish to extend my congratulations to the elected members of the Bureau.

I should not fail, on this occasion, to extend my sincere thanks to H.E. Mr Peter Goosen, Ambassador of South Africa, for his successful leadership during the previous session of the Conference.

I would also like to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, on his re-election as Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons ("Organisation"). I also wish to congratulate him, as well as the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation and the States Parties for winning the Nobel Peace Prize this year. This Prize attests the effectiveness of this Organisation and the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Convention").

In this sense, my delegation reiterates the call on states that have not yet acceded to the Convention to do so, in order to achieve international peace and security. The universality of the Convention cannot be achieved only by the number of states acceding thereto, but by the total elimination of all types of those weapons.

The State of Qatar, since its accession to the Convention, has spared no efforts to take continuous and firm steps to support the implementation of the Convention and its activities.

The National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons, in collaboration with other major actors in the State, hosted many events including workshops and training courses, on the Asian continent level, in different subjects related directly to the Convention and other relevant international conventions. The State of Qatar covered all related costs, with the aim of contributing to technical and human capacity-building necessary to achieve and implement the objectives of the Convention.



In furtherance of the objectives of the Convention, the State of Qatar has established, in cooperation with the Organisation, a regional training centre on the operations of the Convention. The Centre was officially inaugurated on 11 December 2012, in the presence of the Director-General of the Organisation. The Centre, under the name of “Doha Regional Centre for Training on Conventions on Weapons of Mass Destruction”, is the first centre of its kind in the Asian continent. It contributes to the implementation of the Security Council resolution 1540 and many other international conventions, in particular, agreements to ban weapons of mass destruction.

We should express our appreciation and gratitude to the Asian States Parties and all Member States of the Organisation for their support to the establishment of this centre, which the State of Qatar places at the service of Asian states.

Thanks to all Qatari national efforts, including the active work of the State of Qatar as a member of the Executive Council, the States Parties of the Asian Group have supported the renewal of Qatar membership of the Council for the next period 2014-2016. In this regard, my delegation wishes to express its profound appreciation of for this support and reaffirms that Qatar will continue its vital role in activating and strengthening the role of the Organisation on both the regional and international levels, in order to achieve the universality of the Convention and support the future priorities of the OPCW in the coming period.

The failure of the international community to deal decisively and responsibly with the catastrophic situation in Syria, and its continued overlooking of the serious violations and massacres committed by the Syrian regime against its own people, encouraged this regime to persist in the killings, using all kinds of heavy weapons and, even worse, using chemical weapons in the area of Ghouta on 21 August 2013, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law.

While we condemn in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons in Syria, we call upon the international community to compel the Syrian regime to implement the decisions of the Executive Council at its Thirty-Third and Thirty-Fourth Meetings, dated 27 September 2013 and 15 November 2013, respectively, and the decision of the Security Council 2118.

Furthermore, we call upon the Security Council to consider any reports of progress presented by the OPCW under Article VIII of the Convention to ensure that cases of non-compliance are referred to the Security Council. We would also like to emphasise the need to bring perpetrators of crimes of use of chemical weapons to criminal justice, as these crimes are deemed war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Mr Chairperson,

Placing the Syrian chemical weapons under international control and disposal thereof, as soon as possible, is the first step in the right direction towards achieving the universality of the Convention. In this regard, the State of Qatar hopes that the possessor States will complete disposal of their chemical weapons, so that the Convention maintains its credibility and becomes an example to be followed by other conventions.

In conclusion, I wish to request that this statement be considered as one of the official documents of this Session of Conference of the States Parties.

Thank you.