

Oral Statement by Permanent Representative of India H.E. Reenat Sandhu under General Debate of 100th session of Executive Council, OPCW, 05 July 2022

1. Thank you Chair for giving me the floor. My delegation welcomes you as the Chair of the Executive Council. I am confident that under your leadership, we will have a successful session.

2. We thank Director-General for his statement and detailed reports on various activities of the organisation. We commend the efforts of the Technical Secretariat for carrying out verification and capacity building programmes of OPCW despite the pandemic.

3. India associates itself with the Statement by NAM States Parties.

4. Mr. Chairperson, this year marks an important milestone in the history of the Convention, which has been successfully implemented for the last 25 years. The fifth review conference next year will provide an important opportunity for States Parties to come together and chart out future goals based on consensus.

5. India reaffirms its steadfast commitment for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention and supports efforts to achieve its universality. It is commendable that 99 per cent of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been destroyed under verification. We sincerely hope that the destruction of the remaining stockpiles would be completed at the earliest.

6. Despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19, India has actively cooperated with the OPCW for inspections of our declared industrial facilities. In similar manner, we urge other State Parties

to take supportive actions to meet the target of Article VI inspections for the year 2022.

7. India condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, and under any circumstances. India is of the opinion that all perpetrators of such abhorrent acts must be held accountable. At the same time, all investigations into alleged use of chemical weapons should be impartial, objective and conducted strictly in accordance with the Convention. My delegation is of the firm view that the impartiality and integrity of the OPCW should be preserved under all circumstances.

8. India stands for promotion of peaceful uses of chemical technology and enhancing international cooperation in the field of chemical activities. In collaboration with Technical Secretariat, India has been successfully conducting capacity building programmes to enhance skills in analysis of chemicals and lab skills. In April 2022, India conducted a training course in collaboration with the TS, with participation of 19 experts from 18 countries including from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and GRULAC regions. India stands ready to continue to contribute to OPCW's capacity building efforts.

9. To conclude, my delegation would like to reiterate the importance of the principle of consensus and assures full cooperation to the Chair in achieving the same.
