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Statement by Nigeria

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By

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at

The Thematic debate of the First Committee:

Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

71st United Nations General Assembly

New York, 18 October 2016

Mr. Chairman,

It is profound that this cluster addresses all issues of implementation regarding the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Acquisition and Stockpiling and use of Chemical Weapons. Let me also join others who have earlier spoken to commend the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). My delegation recognizes the efforts of the Organization to ensure a total and complete evaluation and on-site inspections of declarations by Member States.

The importance of Chemical Weapons Convention in the prevention of proliferation of chemical weapons cannot be over-stressed, particularly in the concerted efforts towards the total destruction of existing stockpiles of these weapons. I congratulate the OPCW for its giant stride in the eighteen years of its existence and in the guidance provided by its management, administration and the technical expert team, including the wider interaction between the Scientific Advisory Board and the policy-making organs.

My delegation recalls the successful completion and what appeared to be a closure of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in Syria in 2014, as a strident reflection and recognition of the leadership of the UN and one that underscored the tireless and collective efforts shown by many States on this subject. My delegation commends

the decisive approach through which OPCW experts collaborated with the UN at the time, to address timely and wholesomely address the case. The reported case of the use of chemical weapons again in Syria as contained in the most recent report of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanisms (JIM) is troubling. Nigeria remains strongly committed to steps and measures to forestall and prevent the use of Chemical Weapons under any guise; and where reports are made, requisite authorities should step in and engage in thorough and scrupulous investigation, for the sanctity of international peace and security, rule of law and protection of civilians. Having signed and ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Nigeria remains committed to fulfilling her obligations in meeting CWC's overall objectives of promotion and verification of adherence to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

The need to highlight the growing concerns regarding the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors cannot be overstressed. My delegation welcomes the consecutive meetings between the 1540 Expert Group and the OPCW's Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) as a signpost on the need to enhance the inter-connectedness and cooperation between the OPCW and the 1540 Committee. Having served in its Executive Council, and not too long ago as Chair of the OPCW's International Working Group on Anti-Terrorism, Nigeria

promises its continued support for initiatives by the Organization towards the universalization of the ban on the use of Chemical Weapons. We note the Organization's phenomenal growth and urge the remaining UN Member States that are yet to become part of this noble cause to commence the process and ensure ratification and membership.

As an important pillar in the prevention of and response to attacks involving chemical weapons or toxic chemicals, my delegation calls for the continued sponsorship of States Parties, particularly from Africa, to ensure that they benefit from OPCW's organized capacity building programmes, including exchange of scientific and technical information for purposes not prohibited under the convention. In this regard and to ensure a wider and further understanding of multilateral disarmament measures, my delegation wishes to introduce the draft resolution titled: "**United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services**". This draft resolution has already been circulated to delegations. We note with satisfaction, the overwhelming support for this resolution in the past sessions of the General Assembly and call on all delegations to continue to support it. This will ensure a wider understanding of the ideals of multilateral disarmament measures.

I thank you.