



STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA

**AT THE THEMATIC DEBATE ON CLUSTER 2 - OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS
DESTRUCTION
OF THE 80th SESSION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE UN GENERAL
ASSEMBLY (UNGA80)**

22 OCTOBER 2025

Chairperson,

South Africa associates with the statement delivered by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

We reiterate the collective responsibility to uphold the international norm against the production, use and stockpiling of chemical weapons established under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

South Africa continues to support the OPCW as the only technically competent international authority in the field of chemical weapons. My delegation therefore calls on all States Parties to redouble their efforts towards cultivating a culture of consensus in the work of this Organisation and restore an environment of cooperation.

Chairperson,

We underline the importance of the full implementation of Article XI in order to strengthen and accelerate the economic and technological development of States Parties. Regarding Article VII, South Africa encourages the OPCW Technical Secretariat to work closely with States Parties and to continue providing appropriate, tailor-made assistance and technical support.

The Africa Programme remains a core component of the International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) programmes and to guarantee its sustainability, we see the importance of future phases of this programme being fully funded under the regular budget of the OPCW. The transfer of technology, knowledge, material, and equipment for peaceful purposes also remains important.

Chairperson,

South Africa regrets that the Ninth Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Review Conference did not agree on a substantive outcome, however, we welcome the decision to establish a Working Group open to all States Parties with the aim to develop specific measures, including possible legally-binding measures, that could include recommendations to strengthen and institutionalise the Convention.

South Africa believes that the Working Paper on voluntary guidelines that was tabled at the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Article VII, on assistance, response and preparedness, remains valid and open for endorsement.

South Africa shares the view that Article X should promote the right of States Parties to participate in the exchange of technology, equipment, materials and scientific information for peaceful purposes, and that States Parties in a position to do so, should contribute to the further development of scientific knowledge and discoveries in this field.

South Africa also attaches great importance to the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism (UNSGM) to establish facts regarding alleged chemical or biological weapon incidents.

I thank you.