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**DENMARK**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JARL FRIJS-MADSEN  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK TO THE  
OPCW AT THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL  
WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Excellencies and dear colleagues,

Let me start by congratulating you, H.E. Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast, on the election as chairperson of the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference). Let me also express our gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia, the Director-General, the Technical Secretariat and all those who have taken on special responsibilities in preparing and conducting this Review Conference. I assure you all of Denmark's full cooperation and support.

Denmark aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to highlight a few topics of particular importance to Denmark.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is perhaps the most successful regime in international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. There is near full universality and the regime has constituted a global norm against the use of chemical weapons. That is something to be proud of. As such, it is our duty as States Parties to safeguard and support the OPCW as the guardian of the Convention. To achieve this, we must counter the threat of re-emergence of chemical weapons. Those responsible for using them must be held accountable, swiftly and without hesitation. The full destruction of chemical weapons, and preventing their re-emergence, is why we are all gathered. We share the same goal. A world free of chemical weapons.

Numerous reports from the United Nations and the OPCW's Investigation and Identification Team have documented Syria's repeated breaches of the Convention. We therefore urge Syria to change its course and to fulfil its international obligations; to abide by the Convention; to ensure full declaration of its chemical weapons stockpiles; and to allow the OPCW's staff access to its facilities. This is how the global regime against chemical weapons should work.

In a manifest violation of the United Nations Charter and international law, Russia has invaded Ukraine. Denmark condemns this war of aggression and calls on Russia to withdraw completely from the internationally recognised borders of the territory of Ukraine. We also



consider the ongoing disinformation campaign against Ukraine to be unfounded and unacceptable.

We need to ensure that the Organisation remains fit for purpose to effectively implement its mandate. To achieve this objective, we need to:

First, adapt the chemical weapons verification regime to better reflect the rapid developments in science and technology.

Second, we need to secure an Organisation that is capable of attracting and retaining highly qualified staff. In that regard, Denmark supports a higher degree of flexibility in the OPCW tenure policy. Along the same lines, we recognise that diversity is a strength – when it comes to both gender and geographical diversity. A wide range of views within the Technical Secretariat is crucial for qualified decision-making. As such, it is incumbent on us—the States Parties—to support the OPCW in improving the diversity of its staff, by encouraging qualified candidates to apply for vacancies in the Organisation.

Third, we wish to highlight the need to engage with all relevant external stakeholders, ranging from civil society, academia, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), think tanks and the chemical industry. Close collaboration with these stakeholders will enrich the thinking process within the Organisation. We thus wish to underscore the need for their broadest possible, meaningful, and non-discriminatory participation in the Conference of the States Parties.

Denmark remains a strong advocate for the Chemical Weapons Convention. As such, we will continue to offer our unwavering support to the OPCW in the years to come.

To conclude, I would request that this this statement be circulated as an official document of the Fifth Review Conference and published on the OPCW external server and public website.

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