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MALTA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARK A. PACE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA 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,
Ambassadors,
Distinguished delegates,

Malta wishes to join other delegations in extending sincere congratulations on your appointment 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) and assures you of our full support. We thank Director-General Arias, and the Technical Secretariat for all your efforts in preparation of this Conference. We extend our special gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Kuusing for his sterling work in the Open-Ended Working Group.

Malta fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I add the following remarks in our national capacity.

When we look back on the last five years, we celebrate the fact that nearly all the world's declared chemical stockpile has been veritably destroyed. At the same time, we note with regret the several instances in which chemicals were used in violation of the Convention. The circumstances surrounding the poisoning of Alexey Navalny remain unresolved. As the latest Investigation and Identification Team's (IIT) report yet again confirmed, chemical weapons have been used in Syria, killing innocent civilians. We call on the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic to fully cooperate with the OPCW in accordance with their obligations under the Convention.

Moreover, Malta is deeply concerned at allegations of possible use of chemical weapons in the context of Russia's unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. We call on the Russian Federation to seize all military operations within the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine. We condemn the spreading of misinformation and false allegations by the Russian Federation.

Let us reiterate once again that the use or threat of use of Chemical Weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone under any circumstances is totally unacceptable.



Looking ahead at the upcoming five years, we note the changes in the chemical industry and rapid developments in science and technology. We note with concern the possibility of misuse of chemical weapons by non-State actors and the employment of elements not yet listed in the Convention. My delegation believes that it is important for the Fifth Review Conference to further enhance the capabilities of the Secretariat to fulfil its verification and investigation mandates.

We are confident that the new ChemTech Centre will significantly enhance the OPCW's capabilities to fulfil its primary function of verification, address new challenges, while contributing to capacity building of State Parties.

At the outset of the Conference, Malta wishes to express strong support for the provisional draft text prepared by the Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group. We consider it a solid basis for this week's deliberations and the final outcome document for this Conference.

Malta stresses the importance of full compliance with the convention as a key instrument of disarmament and non-proliferation of the rules based international order and calls on all States Parties to fully implement its provisions.

Finally, Mr Chairman, I wish to reaffirm that Malta stands ready to support the OPCW in its work to prevent all use of chemical weapons. We reiterate our commitment, to multilateralism and cooperation for the achievement of peace and security for all. We are even more conscious of this commitment during this period while we serve as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council.

I kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the Fifth Review Conference and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.

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