



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

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ENGLISH only

COOK ISLANDS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. CAPTAIN IAN FINLEY
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COOK ISLANDS
TO THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION
AT THE FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

One hundred years since the Cook islanders serving in the New Zealand Pioneer division in the First World War witnessed and suffered the tragedy that was Passchendaele and the horrors inflicted by the first use of mustard gas we have been called, now as a State in our own right, to this special session to address not only the existence of such barbaric weapons but the reality of their continued use.

As a remote small island State bordered on all sides by the vast Pacific Ocean it may be considered that we are somehow protected by distance from the use of chemical weapons for the slaughter of innocents in the Syrian Arab Republic and the targeting by authoritarian regimes of political opponents within the territories of other States. However, an attack on one State Party to the treaty is an affront to us all and must be condemned.

As a peace loving people looking out from our Islands to a world seemingly still plagued by horrors that our forefathers travelled far into a different hemisphere to confront a hundred years ago, my government wishes to associate itself with the draft decision C-SS-4/DEC/CRP.1/Rev.1, dated 22 June 2018 and submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and others, and call on all States Parties to support its adoption.

Mr Chairperson, we wish our comments to be annexed to the record of this special session of the OPCW and be distributed as an official document of the conference and placed on the public web sites of the Organisation.

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