



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

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BULGARIA

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
DELIVERED BY MS. JUDIT KOROMI
CHAIR OF THE WORKING PARTY ON NON-PROLIFERATION (CONOP) OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE
AT THE FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union has strongly supported from the outset the initiative to convene this special session of the Conference of the States Parties in order to take urgent action to preserve and uphold the global norm against the use of chemical weapons, which has been seriously threatened by the repeated use of such weapons over the past five years in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

We reiterate that the use of chemical weapons, including the use of any toxic chemical as a weapon, by anyone, be it a State, or a non-State actor, anywhere, and under any circumstances is abhorrent and must be rigorously condemned. It is a war crime and may amount to a crime against humanity.

We remain convinced that the international community has the task and the responsibility to identify and hold accountable those responsible for the use of chemical weapons, and reiterate our deep regret that the mandate of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism, established by the United Nations Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks, was not renewed in November 2017.

We strongly supported, therefore, the view that the issue of attribution can and should be addressed by the OPCW.

On 25 June 2018, the Council of the European Union welcomed the special session of the Conference of the States Parties and emphasised the importance of a strong outcome to reinforce the international rules-based order.



We thank all the States Parties for their active participation in the Conference and congratulate them for the adoption of the decision addressing the threat from chemical weapons use.

This is a welcome achievement which will enhance, in particular, the capacity of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks, thereby upholding and strengthening the non-use norm and the Convention's regime as a whole.

We stand ready to cooperate with all the States Parties with a view to the implementation of this decision.

I would kindly ask you, Mr Chairperson, to distribute this statement as an official document of the Conference and to publish it on the public web-sites of the Organisation. Thank you.

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