



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Fourth Special Session  
26 and 27 June 2018

C-SS-4/NAT.51  
27 June 2018  
ENGLISH only

**DENMARK**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JENS-OTTO HORSLUND  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK TO THE OPCW  
AT THE FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset let me state that Denmark aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by Ms Judit Koromi on behalf of the European Union. I wish to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

More than 20 years ago, we created the Chemical Weapons Convention. We did this united by our common desire and shared vision; to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons for the sake of mankind.

Today this vision is under attack. Recent years have seen increasing use of chemical weapons in different countries and regions across the world. Many reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission have documented use of sarin and chlorine in the Syrian Arab Republic. In a number of instances, the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has attributed this use to the Syrian regime. We have seen the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury confirmed by the OPCW. Denmark has expressed its full solidarity and support to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in this respect. Also in Kuala Lumpur a nerve agent was used in a fatal attack in 2017, and use of chemical weapons by ISIS has been well documented.

Crucial points can be drawn from these horrible acts, apart from the fact that we are all under threat of use of chemical weapons. Firstly, the international community must stand united in condemning these blatant violations of our Convention and our common values. The victims of these crimes are children, women and men—innocent civilians. But it is also our Convention, our Organisation and one of the corner stones of the international community—the global ban on chemical weapons—that are under attack.

Secondly, the international community must stand united in warding off this attack. Attribution is central to this purpose. We need to know who is responsible in order to take appropriate measures. It is therefore deeply regrettable that the United Nations Security Council was not able to renew the mandate of the JIM. We all know why. However, impasse



in New York must not lead to global inaction. Our treaty provides the necessary framework for attributing use when it has occurred. Indeed, we, the OPCW, have a duty to do so in the absence of other mechanisms. Doing nothing is a course of action that is not acceptable to Denmark.

Thirdly, the OPCW and the Technical Secretariat has so far performed admirably in addressing these attacks in different ways and within the Convention. It has thus demonstrated its ability to handle such situations with the highest degree of professionalism and integrity, given the appropriate tasking. It is against that background that Denmark, as a co-sponsor, lends its full support to the draft decision originally tabled on 13 June by the United Kingdom entitled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use”. We humbly ask all delegations to join us in supporting this draft decision and the OPCW itself.

The facts are simple: we all condemn the use of chemical weapons, but they have been used nonetheless—against innocent civilians. Our Convention provides a framework for investigating and attributing responsibility. The Technical Secretariat is the means to that end. Only those who intend to use or have used chemical weapons have anything to fear—the truth.

Denmark firmly believes that those responsible for using chemical weapons must be held to account. Attribution is a sine qua non to this effect. It is our shared responsibility to ensure mechanisms for this purpose exist. Future historians and victims alike will judge us harshly should we fail in this endeavour.

I thank you Mr Chairperson.

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