



THE HAGUE

Madame Chairperson
Distinguished colleagues,

At the outset I wish to also lend the voice of my delegation in congratulating Ambassador Fernando Arias on his appointment as the new Director General of the OPCW. Ambassador Arias can count on Malta's full support during the conduct of his work.

Malta fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Austria Ambassador on behalf of the European Union. I wish to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

Recent international developments have impressed the need to reaffirm the importance & relevance of the Chemical Weapons Convention which is the leading global norm prohibiting the use of such weapons. We need to work collectively to ensure that the CWC remains the leading effective instrument to address current and future challenges. In this backdrop we support the work already being done in view of the Fourth Review Conference of the CWC and we augur that we can reach agreement on the outcome document. Full adherence to the Convention should remain our top priority.

In this context, we also need to follow up on Decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons and we support the Technical Secretariat in its work to implement this decision. We thank the DG for the reports he has already provided on this matter.

Malta remains deeply concerned on the current situation in Syria and would like to reaffirm its support for the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). In the same vein we restate our support for the Technical Secretariat and the work conducted in relation to the Salisbury and Amesbury incidents and reaffirm our solidarity with the UK.

Malta would also like to express its concern with regard to recent events threatening the integrity of our Organisation and its work. We deplore such actions which undermine international law and international institutions.

Finally, Malta would like to extend its full support for the work of the Technical Secretariat and remains confident in the competence, integrity and impartiality of the OPCW's technical experts. Madam Chair, My delegation takes this opportunity to assure the Director General and his team of our full support in the implementation of our objectives and work programme, as well as our commitment to address challenges and bring to a successful conclusion upcoming tasks and actions, including the discussions on the budget and the IVth Review Conference.

I kindly request that this statement is issued as an official document and placed on the OPCW public website.

I thank you Madam Chairperson.