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Mister Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome the opportunity to speak today in plenary session about the management of chemicals exposure fatalities from a forensic pathology point of view.

First a statement of purpose.

Forensic pathology deals with chemicals exposure fatalities on a daily basis. In this short presentation, I would like to stress two points which are important for me as a forensic pathologist and researcher.

Firstly,

- The need for detecting chemical weapons in biomedical samples not only in immediate cases but also in retrospective cases.

There have been numerous chlorine attacks recently. However, there is very limited analytical methods for detecting exposure to chlorine in human bodies. Moreover, detecting chlorine in retrospective cases is virtually impossible. For this reason, forensic examination of chlorine victims provides little evidence. I would like to point out that the development of analytical methods for detecting exposure to chlorine from biological samples would strongly support the investigation.

The development of analytical methods for detecting exposure to chlorine in post-mortem cases is crucial. This is because, recent chlorine attacks have one thing in common, all attacks took place in remote or hard-to-reach areas. For this reason, the evidence was not being collected immediately.

Clearly, it is necessary to develop a biomarker which can detect chlorine exposure in both ante-mortem and post-mortem cases. Hence, research on this matter should be supported. As a scientist, I am carrying out research on this subject and our main difficulty is limited funding.

Secondly,

Forensic techniques can be a useful tool for the verification of use of toxic chemicals.

As the OPCW Science Advisory Board pointed out, traditional forensic techniques, including DNA analysis, fingerprinting, chemical criminalistics, quality management, and crime scene management capabilities, may all be valuable for OPCW field operations, such as the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

I strongly believe that both the forensic community and the OPCW will greatly benefit from working together.

Thank you for your kind attention, and I wish for this statement to be made part of the final RC4 record and posted on the OPCW website.