

**AMBAXXATA
TAR-REPUBBLIKA TA' MALTA**



**EMBASSY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA**

THE HAGUE

Mr. Chairperson
Director General
Ambassadors and
Distinguished Delegates

My delegation would like to, first and foremost, congratulate you, Ambassador Vasquez Gomez on your appointment and commend your commitment not only to the success of this Conference but also to the Organisation. My delegation extends its full support to you. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Puja from Indonesia as well as the DG and the Secretariat for all the effort and work in preparing for this Conference.

Malta fully aligns itself with the EU Statement. I wish to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

Malta strongly believes that the Chemical Weapons Convention is a fundamental building block of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. At this critical juncture we believe that it is in the interest of all State Parties to preserve the CWC through the strengthening of this important international norm. The reported use of Chemical Weapons in different parts of the globe seriously threatens the universal prohibition of these weapons and has been a source of serious concern. It is because of this changing scenario that we need to send a clear message during this Review Conference upholding the CWC and the prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The need to uphold the provisions of the CWC also necessitates renewed efforts which preserve the integrity and efforts of the OPCW. We need to ensure that the OPCW can fulfil its responsibilities during the next five years and in this vein MT would like to extend its support to the Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias for his professionalism and efforts to take the organisation forward. We also have full confidence that the Technical Secretariat will implement all decisions.

In this regard, Malta would also like to underline the importance of the Decision taken at the Fourth Special Session in June 2018 (C-SS-4/DEC.3) as we believe this is an important step that would allow the OPCW to better carry out its work

whenever chemical weapons use occurs. Malta believes it is very important to be able to establish the facts in such instances.

Given the worrying developments since the last Review Conference, we believe that universal adherence to the Convention is more important than ever before. We need to ensure the prohibition of chemical weapons and prevent any re-emergence of such weapons. This Conference needs to give the necessary assurances of our joint commitment in adhering to the Convention.

Malta commends those who work tirelessly for the goals of this Convention, even in these difficult times. Malta also welcomes efforts to strengthen the Organisation and we welcome ideas to improve gender balance as well as initiatives to deliver capacity building. It is important that the Organisation continues to benefit from the best technical expertise available. We look forward to developing these ideas further.

Malta strongly believes that the CWC is indeed a unique achievement and a fundamental pillar of our shared security. That is why Malta considers it essential that we continue to work together in order to maintain and strengthen its implementation and the effectiveness of the OPCW's work going forward.

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

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.