RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**STATEMENT BY GEORGY KALAMANOV
DEPUTY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES UNDER AGENDA ITEM 12**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

The Iranian delegation has presented amendments to the Draft Programme and Budget document of the OPCW for 2019. The Russian Federation is a co-sponsor of this proposal. Following what has already been stated by our Iranian colleagues, we would like to add this.

On July 6, the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") presented an optimal Draft Programme and Budget document of the OPCW for 2019, but then corrected it, adding spending on attribution. Due to controversial nature of this approach that is not shared by a large number of states, the OPCW Executive Council convened twice, and both times failed to reach consensus. As a result, a decision was made to bring to the Conference the non-agreed Programme and Budget document of the OPCW for 2019.

Current draft budget among other things envisages a EUR 2.4 million increase in spending for the purposes of attribution. And all that is taking place against the backdrop of critical underfinancing of technical assistance programmes for developing countries under Article XI of this international treaty.

The idea of financing "field missions", expert consultations, and analytical support of the proposed attributive group at the expense of voluntary contributions amounting to around EUR 1.3 million appears to be dubious as well. In that case, it will be the "donors" who will actually determine the feasibility of the group`s specialists deployment at a place of a supposed incident with the use of chemical weapons, as well as directly influence the mode of work with physical evidence and its analysis. Such an approach may make one question the impartiality of the work of such a group.

At the very least, the decision of the Secretariat that decided to announce the vacancy openings in the attribution group not waiting for the outcome of the Conference and lacking required financial allocations is dubious. It turns out that now it is not the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention") but the Secretariat and a

certain group of countries that make decisions with our and your participation being required only to agree with them.

Without touching upon the political element of the issue, we draw your attention to the financial part. The paradox is that all States Parties are supposed to be paying for creation of the attribution mechanism, including those that disagree with this on principle. In this regard, we, together with our Iranian colleagues, propose to introduce relevant changes to the Draft Decision on adopting the main budget document.

Our critics may rest easy: we are not trying to "kill" the budget of the Organisation thus paralysing the implementation of the tasks of the Convention. Quite the opposite: we are trying to find the only possible consensus-based variant of the budget.

We propose to go back to the version of the Draft Programme and Budget document of the OPCW for 2019, dated 6 July 2018. This version of the document – the first one – was developed after the Decision on attribution was voted. Yet it is based on the traditional OPCW principle of "zero nominal growth", and it contains no additional contributions for attribution. On the other hand, a special fund for cyber-security is provided for. The Russian side has no objections regarding the creation of such a fund.

Since the aforementioned document was not conjured out of the blue, but prepared by the experts of the OPCW Secretariat themselves, we proceed from the assumption that the Organisation will be able to continue its activities normally with a sufficient budget in case it is adopted.

We would ask the States Parties to support this proposal.

Thank you.

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