



OPCW

Executive Council

Sixty-Second Meeting

14 January 2019

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NETHERLANDS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PAUL VAN DEN IJSSEL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS
TO THE OPCW AT THE SIXTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

For the very first time in the existence of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), Member States are asked to consider a proposal for a Technical Change to Schedule 1 of the Annex on Chemicals to the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Annex on Chemicals”). Or in plain language: to add two extremely toxic chemical families to the Convention Schedules of Chemicals.

The two chemical families to be added to Schedule 1 (of the Annex on Chemicals) are military-grade, extremely toxic chemicals. Both chemical families, of which one member was used in two instances in the United Kingdom causing grave bodily harm, and even led to a fatality, and the other family closely related, have no known use for purposes not prohibited by the Convention, as was confirmed by the Technical Secretariat’s assessment of the proposal.

To us as the host country of the OPCW and as a member state, the credibility of the Convention, and the OPCW, our Organisation is of the utmost importance. Adding these chemical families to the Schedule strongly reinforces that credibility. We were, therefore, pleased to join Canada and the United States of America as a co-sponsor of this technical change proposal.

Madam Chairperson,

Soon it will be one year ago that the Salisbury and Amesbury incidents took place; we need to take action urgently to confront the clear and present danger these chemicals constitute and show that we, Member States, are united in our determination to confirm and underline the important role the OPCW has in keeping the world safe from the use of chemical weapons by bringing this new class of chemical weapons under its control.

As was mentioned before by the Canadian delegation, the proposal that was submitted by the Russian Federation contains the same two chemical families that are included in the proposal of Canada, the United States and the Netherlands, be it with a slightly narrower scope. This illustrates that the urgent need to take action is broadly shared among Member States. A consensus outcome of this meeting should therefore be possible.



Madam Chairperson,

To conclude, a recommendation by the Executive Council to approve the joint proposal of Canada, the United States and the Netherlands — even more so when taken by consensus — will send a strong signal that we, Member States, take our responsibility seriously. Last year, we witnessed divisions on many issues between the Member States. Let us start this year on a different note. We count on the support of all Member States.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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