

**STATEMENT BY GEORGY V. KALAMANOV**  
**HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**  
**DEPUTY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE**  
**AT THE IV CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION REVIEW**  
**CONFERENCE**

Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Director General,  
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Russian delegation I am glad to welcome you, dear Mr. Chairman, to such a responsible post. We are confident that your solid leadership will make the Fourth Review Conference of the CWC run smoothly.

We expect that States Parties are determined to discuss agenda items in a constructive manner. We proceed from the assumption that we have three major goals to address: restore the credibility of the Organization, strengthen and universalize the CWC. We believe the common aspiration for concrete results would help us review the implementation of the Convention over the last 5 years in a comprehensive and unbiased way, and based on the analysis of the present situation highlight key points in the OPCW work for the next 5-year period. We are convinced that the States Parties should address all OPCW issues, no matter how complicated, in good faith, guided by a consensus-based approach.

Sadly, we have to admit that there are a number of problems. The times our Organization is going through are far from being the best ones due to a deep division between its members. We are facing politicization and even

confrontation in the work on the Syria's "chemical dossier" as well as on the UK-inspired "Skripal case", and now also on politically motivated "attribution" which is being literally imposed by a number of Western countries on the rest of CWC States Parties. An illustrative example of that is the just concluded 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Conference of the CWC States Parties.

We have stated more than once and hereby reaffirm that the decision to authorize the OPCW Technical Secretariat to "identify the perpetrators" of the use of chemical weapons is illegitimate. By acceding to the Convention, the States Parties joined the Organization with a clear-cut mandate of this essentially administrative body, namely: technical assistance to national chemical stockpile destruction programs, control over chemical industry to prevent the production of chemical weapons and unchecked traffic of its precursors. I would emphasize, the OPCW itself and its Technical Secretariat are assigned to a purely practical task on this matter – that is, implementation of the relevant verification procedures.

Now, we are told that a purely technical organization must be urgently vested with quasi-prosecutorial functions. That kind of transformation of the Convention, if I may say so, directly affects the fundamental principles and provisions laid down in this international treaty, as well as entails fundamental changes in the powers of OPCW Technical Secretariat.

Those actual amendments, affecting the very essence of OPCW work, are proposed to be adopted in circumvention of CWC Article XV. As we all know, it clearly states that the Convention may be amended only by an Amendment Conference. Besides, this Article provides that amendments may be adopted only if no State Party casts a negative vote.

Thus, making a decision on the "attribution" issue in the OPCW by voting at the CSP is a destructive step with regard to the chemical disarmament and non-proliferation regime which has been evolving for decades. Moreover,

that implies the upright infringement on the exclusive prerogatives of the UN SC as the sole international authority responsible for war and peace issues.

To support this destructive initiative, we were requested to approve the Draft Programme and Budget of the Organization for 2019 with a 2.4 mln. euro increase in total allocations, specifically budgeted for the illegitimate "attribution" purposes, in contravention of the previous agreements on zero growth of the OPCW expenditures. We believe that diverting resources for purposes not envisaged by the Convention, is absolutely inadmissible, particularly when the programs of technical assistance to developing countries under CWC Article XI remain persistently underfunded.

The Russian Federation has proposed a set of concrete measures as a way out of the present situation. During the 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference together with China we introduced a Draft Decision that envisioned the creation of a working group that could provide legal assessment of what happened at the 4<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Conference and answer the main question: do the Decision and associated activities of the Technical Secretariat on its implementation conform with provisions of the CWC.

To avoid leaving the Organization without a budget we proposed to go back to the original version of the document that did not include funding for attribution, with a view that the Organization would continue its work, while the working group would be developing its conclusion. Thus together with Iran we introduced a set of amendments to the Draft Decision on the Programme and Budget document.

Unfortunately these proposals were turned down. Together with like-minded states we shall carefully analyze the outcomes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session and make decisions accordingly.

As a State Party and one of the founding fathers of the CWC, Russia considers the earliest global elimination of chemical weapon stockpiles to be an imperative. That is exactly why our country, in spite of the unprecedented scope

and complexity of the relevant national program, has fulfilled its CWC obligations three years ahead of schedule and destroyed the huge stockpiles of the former USSR, amounting to 40,000 tons. We are grateful to those States that provided assistance in completing this mission, as well as to the OPCW Technical Secretariat for longstanding close cooperation.

We urge the USA to speed up the elimination of the declared stockpiles as much as possible. In our view, the partners have opted for too lax conditions for the completion of their programme, in spite of the fact that the US side has all the required financial, scientific, technological and industrial resources for the earliest accomplishment of that task.

We commend the implementation of comprehensive decisions by the UN Security Council and the OPWC Executive Council that jointly made it possible to successfully move out the chemical arsenal from Libya and destroy it abroad. I would like to commend the positive role of the OPWC Technical Secretariat in that work and the States sponsors' contribution to this operation.

We welcome the completed elimination of remnants of chemical warfare capabilities in Iraq that dated back to the rule of Saddam Hussein.

It is evident that the elimination of the Syrian chemical warfare potential under strict international control with the heavy fighting still continuing in that country is a critical milestone in the history of the Organization. Such a result would not have been possible without the interaction between all States Parties to the Convention as well as without the political will and dedicated efforts of the Syrian authorities.

However, with the work on the Syrian track being in progress, interaction of the OPCW Technical Secretariat with official Damascus ran into systematic failures on a number of issues.

For example, there has been actually a stalemate in the assessment of the initial Syria's declaration under Article III of the CWC. The number of absolutely unsubstantiated claims against Damascus has increased from 4 to

22 items in four years. We are very concerned that the more information the Syrian government provides to the OPCW, the more questions it is being asked. It should be understood that with the march of time and facing the long-running armed conflict, Damascus is simply unable to respond to the most of queries. We believe we have to be realistic, since this state of affairs can not last forever.

We believe that the OPCW Technical Secretariat and Syria need to conduct a final review of the remaining issues on the initial declaration. We welcome the mutual willingness of both sides to overcome differences. They should put aside all politically motivated claims and rely solely on expert analysis.

It is obvious that the time has come for a drastic revision of the Terms of Reference of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), which define the framework for interaction between Damascus and the Mission. The mandate of the latter should be fully brought in conformity with the provisions of the CWC.

The FFM's shortcomings in question are as those: unbalanced geographical basis of staff recruitment; selective approach when dealing with witnesses' testimonies, including unjustified disposition to obtain information from opposition sources, as well as structures implicated in the data falsification and close ties with foreign intelligence services; reluctance to carry out field operations under the pretext of security risks, although the relevant guarantees from the Syrian government have been repeatedly provided. The inevitable implications of such approaches have been a violation of the "chain of custody", that is the fundamental principle envisaged by the CWC when conducting investigations.

We still maintain that the adoption of the Draft Decision of the OPCW Executive Council on improving the FFM's work, submitted by Russia and Iran back in the 86th session of that governing body in October 2017, could have rectified the situation. Unfortunately, it had not gained sufficient support. We propose to go back to substantial discussion of the issue.

We are concerned that the US and UK chemical weapons have been found in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Panama. We believe it is necessary for the OPWC Technical Secretariat to step up its supervision over the responsibilities of the CWC States Parties to timely declare abandoned or old chemical weapon, when it is found on their territories. We suppose that untimely or incorrect submission of such declarations is unacceptable.

We are deeply concerned over the developments following the incidents in Salisbury and Amesbury and the actions of the British authorities. The UK, without any evidence, has accused Russia of involvement in the use of toxic substances in its territory. At the same time, London, without any explanation, refuses to act in the realm of international law and to cooperate with Russia in the framework of the CWC and through legal authorities in order to clarify the circumstances of the incident. That obviously has raised numerous questions, including with regard to the activities of the laboratory of the UK Ministry of Defense in Porton Down. At this point, we consider it appropriate and even necessary to bring the discussions on this issue within the OPCW to an open format.

Since a detected chemical agent in the Salisbury and Amesbury incidents is beyond the scope of CWC and classified by the West as “Novichok” it prompts immediate action on the part of the OPCW. In particular, the relevant OPCW Schedules on Chemicals should be reviewed in a comprehensive manner with regard to nerve agents. In this regard, we would like to draw our colleagues' attention to the relevant initiative taken by the Russian Federation back in May 2018. Our experts analyzed specialized literature and found out that nearly a thousand chemical compounds of that kind should be considered by the OPCW with a view to their eventual inclusion in the relevant schedules.

We cannot ignore numerous facts indicating that terrorists have the necessary capacity to use industrial chemicals for military purposes as well as to

produce full-fledged military grade chemical warfare agents. We urge the CWC States Parties to focus their efforts on addressing the growing threat of chemical terrorism to fulfil their existing obligations under the Convention. We highly appreciate the decision taken by the OPCW Executive Council in October 2017 in this regard. And yet, we emphasize that the CWC, as stated in the outcome document of the Third Review Conference, is not a counter-terrorism treaty. In this context, we believe that the Russian initiative to elaborate an International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Chemical and Biological Terrorism – with the OPCW playing an important role in its implementation – put forward at the Geneva Disarmament Conference is more relevant than ever before.

The Organization should keep up with the time. Its tasks are naturally evolving with the Possessor States completing the destruction of the declared stockpiles. Still, the decisions to include additional issues to the agenda of the OPCW governing bodies should not contradict the CWC and overlap with the competence of other international institutions. First and foremost, this relates to incapacitating chemical agents and chemical weapons that were previously owned by Hitler's Germany and dumped in the Baltic Sea.

We would also like to recall the Russian initiative proposed at the Third Review Conference as to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which is still relevant. We collectively call on those States that have not yet signed the Protocol to do so immediately and on those States that have reservations to the Protocol to withdraw them. The latter applies, in particular, to the United States who has reserved the right for reciprocal use of chemical agents in military conflicts.

We believe that it is important to facilitate the implementation of Article XI concerning economic and technological development of the OPCW State Parties for the application of chemistry for purposes not prohibited by the Convention as well as to assist developing countries in building national industrial capacity. We deem the existing restrictions in trade in chemicals

introduced by a number of Western countries as well as artificial barriers within export control regimes to be unsubstantiated.

Following the practice of other international organizations, clear rules for the election of the OPCW Director-General of the Technical Secretariat should be elaborated. They should provide for fair geographical rotation and the establishment of the credentials commission comprising the representatives of all regional groups to ensure transparency and supervision over the elections.

The decision-making process of the Conference of the States Parties also needs revision. The existing vote counting de facto allows the minority to impose its will on the majority. Hence it is flawed and contradicts the principle of consensus envisaged in the CWC.

We believe that the Organization also needs a careful and finely calibrated approach to its human resources policy. We understand the need to maintain the human resources capacity of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. Meanwhile, it is relevant to recruit new specialists, including from developing countries, while preserving continuity of expertise and specific knowledge.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would like to assure you that the delegation of the Russian Federation seeks constructive and goal-oriented work at the Conference, close cooperation with you and, of course, with all delegations in order to yield positive results.

We ask you to circulate this address as an official document of the Fourth CWC Review Conference.

Thank you.