



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

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12 – 15 March 2019

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12 March 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 NINETIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

In addition to the EU statement, the following points:

Two weeks ago, the long-awaited final report on the incident in Douma in April 2018 was circulated. The report confirmed that there are reasonable grounds to assume that the use of a toxic chemical as a weapon took place. Yet another instance where chemical weapons were used in Syria. The use of chemical weapons is – as we all agree in this body - unacceptable. We urge the Director-General to use his mandate given to him at the Special Conference of States Parties last year to determine who is responsible for this flagrant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). The Netherlands fully supports this new task of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”).

Madam Chairperson,

Two months ago, the Executive Council endorsed by consensus a proposal by Canada, the United States of America, and the Netherlands to include two chemical families to Schedule 1. It shows the commitment of Member States to keep the Convention and thereby the OPCW relevant and up to date. The Netherlands indicated that we keep an open mind for any further proposal that can strengthen the OPCW and the Convention. We will assess each proposal on its substance, also taking into account the evaluation of the Secretariat.

Madam Chairperson,

Since our last meeting, we have seen further contributions by Member States to the upgrade of the OPCW Laboratory: the new ChemTecCentre. The Netherlands welcomes these contributions. They illustrate the importance Member States attach to the work of our Organisation. I particularly welcome the announcement this afternoon of the ambassadors of Bangladesh and of the United States in this regard.

To conclude, we share the concerns of the Director-General and others about preserving the expert knowledge of the Secretariat. We think the proposal of the Chair to further explore this matter and find possible solution will be very helpful. We stand ready to play an active role in the discussions.



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Thank you.

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