



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Ninety-First Session

9 – 12 July 2019

EC-91/NAT.13

9 July 2019

ENGLISH only

**GERMANY**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTINE WEIL  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY  
TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Distinguished colleagues,

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, presented by the head of the Finnish delegation, H.E. Ambassador Päivi Kaukoranta.

As this is the first Executive Council (“the Council”) chaired by H.E. Ambassador Andrea Perugini, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Perugini, for assuming this challenging task, and I would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

We are grateful to Director-General Arias for his comprehensive report to this Council which is testimony to the professional, independent, and impartial performance of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) under his leadership.

The last report of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on the attack in Douma, Syria, on 7 April 2018 as received by the Ninetieth Session of the Council in March states clearly that there were reasonable grounds that chlorine was used as a chemical weapon. Since then, attempts have been made which aim to undermine the authority of the OPCW under the able leadership of the Director-General. Let me be very clear: Germany opposes any attempts with the single objective to question the credibility and professionalism of the FFM and the OPCW in general. We have full confidence in the findings of the FFM which had to carry out its tasks under most difficult circumstances. We express our trust in the technical expertise, independence, impartiality, and professionalism of the OPCW and its experts in fulfilling their duties.

On 18 May, Director-General Arias briefed State Parties on the progress made in the structured dialogue with the Syrian Arab Republic.

We are very concerned that no progress has been achieved to clarify the existing gaps and inconsistencies in the Syrian initial chemical weapons declaration.



We urge Syria to cooperate fully with the OPCW and in particular the FFM, DAT, and IIT. This includes issuing visas and granting full access to sites and documents related to its chemical weapons programme. Syria's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Convention") are very clear in this regard.

Syria has breached its obligations as a State Party to the Convention by employing chemical weapons against its own population. The Assad regime must once and for all refrain from using chemical weapons.

The global ban on the use of chemical weapons has been infringed upon numerous times, repeatedly in Syria, but also in Iraq, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom. We, the State Parties to the Convention, have committed ourselves to uphold the aims and objectives of the Convention. We need to take action to ensure that the perpetrators of these abominable deeds will not get away with it. We owe this to the victims, men, women, and children who were injured or who died a terrible death.

That is the reason why, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the rules of procedure, we took the decision at the Special Session of the Conference of States Parties of 27 June 2018. We welcome the progress report of the Director-General on the implementation of this decision. We urge all State Parties to give the IIT the support necessary to fulfil its legitimate mandate. We commend the Director-General for having concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the IIM to seek and exchange information and to take further steps to collaborate with international entities for that purpose.

Germany is committed to support the OPCW's efforts to work with Syria on the full implementation of the Convention, including the OPCW missions of DAT, FFM, and IIT. Only ten days ago, Germany contributed another EUR 1 Million to the OPCW's Trust Fund for Syria Missions. We call upon States Parties to make available funding in support of the important activities of the Trust Fund for Syria Missions.

In January and February, we worked intensively in two special meetings of the Council on the subject of listing toxic chemicals in the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention. The Secretariat has supported these endeavours with its professional, impartial, and independent analysis. We are aware that the joint proposals of Canada, the United States, and the Netherlands enjoyed consensus in the Council in January, while the Russian proposals did not find common ground in the Council in February. As a result of objections by States Parties to both proposals, the next Conference of States Parties will now have to take final action on both proposals.

The Secretariat is mandated with important and challenging tasks. We have to ensure that it has the appropriate means to deal with them. In addition to an appropriate budget, this requires qualified and dedicated personnel. We are convinced that this can best be achieved by giving the Director-General the flexibility to attract and retain special expertise needed in the Secretariat. Germany therefore thanks the Secretariat for its non-paper "Ensuring Diverse and Qualified Workforce at the Technical Secretariat". We commend the two facilitators, H.E. Ambassador Puja from Indonesia and H.E. Ambassador Vásquez Gómez from El Salvador for their strong guidance in the facilitation process and the report they have presented to this Council. Germany will continue to take a constructive approach in the discussions of these important items.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson

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