

AMBAXXATA
TAR-REPUBBLIKA TA' MALTA



EMBASSY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

THE HAGUE

**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARLENE BONNICI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALTA TO THE OPCW
AT THE 92ST SESSION OF THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(THE HAGUE, 8-11 October 2019)**

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Malta fully aligns with the EU statement delivered by the Ambassador of Finland on behalf of the EU. I would like to now add a few very brief comments in my national capacity.

My delegation would like to thank you, Ambassador Andrea Perugini, for your leadership and unwavering commitment to consensus and compromise. I want to assure you of my delegation's full support in your work.

Malta would also like to commend the OPCW Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias for his comprehensive report to the Executive Council. Malta reiterates its full backing to the Organisation's steadfast mission towards a world free of Chemical Weapons. As State Parties, we all bear the responsibility to address any threat posed to global security and stability in the overall non-proliferation architecture. In this vein, Malta expresses its full support and confidence in Director-General Fernando Arias along with the Technical Secretariat to carry out this important work and take the organisation forward.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the facilitators, Ambassador Vasquez Gomez and Ambassador Puja for their hard work. We support the efforts and like others we augur that we can take the issues forward in the interest of this organisation.

Mr Chairperson,

Recent international developments have highlighted the critical importance of the obligations we all have to uphold the Convention. The OPCW plays a central role in ensuring that the CWC remains the leading instrument to address current and future challenges.

To this end, we consider the draft programme and budget as providing the platform for the Organisation to move ahead with its mandate. We also take positive note of the initiative of introducing new elements to further improve functioning of the Organisation, not least the biennial budget approach. In our view, this allows for a more structured approach to the way the Organisation seeks to conduct its business and it facilitates planning.

With regard to the elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme we again reiterate our strong support for the mandate and work carried out by the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) and the Declaration Asset Team (DAT) as well as the IIT and we look forward to the latter's first report.

Finally I want to welcome the OPCW's considerable efforts towards gender equality, with the stated ambition of achieving gender balance being noted positively. This has indeed already been backed by action. Additionally, Malta also underlines the importance for increased geographical balance and addressing under-representation or even non-representation of the individual State Parties within the Organisation.

I kindly request that this statement be issued as an official document and placed on the OPCW public website.