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**CZECH REPUBLIC**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR KATEŘINA SEQUENSOVÁ PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW  
AT THE NINETY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chair, Director-General and distinguished delegates,

The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the Ambassador of Finland on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make a few remarks in our national capacity.

As this is the first time that I am taking the floor as the new Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, allow me to state that, while the person sitting in this chair may have changed, the support of the Czech Republic for the work of this Organisation remains steadfast. We have full confidence in you, Mr Director-General, and the staff of the Technical Secretariat and we very much value your professionalism and independence.

The Czech Republic supports the Draft Programme and Budget for 2020 presented by the Director-General. We consider the proposed spending level justified and we also appreciate the effort of the Technical Secretariat to consolidate the proposal into one draft decision for easier orientation of delegations. Approving the budget is essential for continuing the critical work of the OPCW in the next year and we hope that this Council will be able to recommend the approval of the draft to the Conference of States Parties.

With regards to Syria, the Czech Republic has taken note of the latest developments in this dossier, as presented by the Technical Secretariat at a briefing last week. We welcome that the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) continues its work on identifying those responsible for chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic and we look forward to its first report. We are concerned with the lack of progress on closing the gaps that remain in Syria's initial declaration, as reported by the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with the Technical Secretariat, including with the DAT, Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and IIT.

While we have clearly stated our support for the joint proposal by Canada, the Netherlands and the United States of America for addition of new chemicals to the Annex of the Convention, we have also noted the submission by the Russian Federation of an amended version of its original proposal. We hope that a consensual solution can be found at the Conference of States Parties.



The Czech Republic has long been a supporter of the initiative on central nervous system (CNS)-acting chemicals launched by Australia and Switzerland. We welcome that the first concrete steps have been taken in the process leading up to what we hope to be a consensual decision by the Conference of States Parties next year stating that the aerosolised use of these chemicals is inconsistent with law enforcement purposes as a “purpose not prohibited” under the Convention.

The Czech Republic is one of the States Parties that have presented a proposal to amend the Rules of Procedure for the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters. This non-retroactive common-sense proposal aims to establish clear ethical guidelines for nominees to this important body and a procedure for their potential dismissal in cases of breach of this code of conduct. We encourage other States Parties to support it as well.

Finally, as the preparations for the Conference of States Parties are fully underway, we regret that a small group of States Parties has blocked the accreditation of several non-governmental organisations. The non-governmental sector has been, and should continue to be, an important part of our proceedings.

Thank you Mr Chair, and let me assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

I would like to ask that this statement be made an official document of this session and be posted on the OPCW External Server and public website.

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