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**Mr Chairman, Director-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is a pleasure to speak on behalf of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) from New Delhi, India. IDSA continues to stand tall in its mission to promote national and international security through the generation and dissemination of knowledge on defence and security-related issues. Research at the Institute is driven by a comprehensive agenda which also includes issues related to the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).

**Mr Chairman,**

The Institute conducts several national and international conferences every year. We have also been fortunate to host various eminent dignitaries at our Institute. The Institute publishes few important journals and one amongst them is a biannual journal called *The CBW Magazine* which exclusively addresses issues concerning chemical and biological weapons and is probably one of its kind available globally. Now, for more than ten years this journal is offering a forum for debate for chemical and biological issues and various eminent scholars have contributed in this journal.

**Mr Chairman,**

It is my privilege to make a statement at the 24<sup>th</sup> session on CSP. The ongoing conflict in Syria demonstrates the resurgence in the use of chemical weapons as tools of war. This has been one of the most challenging issues in the recent past. OPCW has undertaken this challenge head-on. Since, its inception during 1997, the OPCW is found to be working tirelessly towards addressing various threats involving chemical weapons without any prejudice. OPCW needs to be complimented for its efforts in addressing the Syrian threat at every level. Also, in order to support the efforts for greater international understanding with regard to the threat of chemical terrorism, the OPCW is engaging various stakeholders including counter-terrorism and chemical weapons experts. However, the threat from chemical weapons is far from over. Accordingly one of the reports published by the Global Public Policy Institute from Germany there have been at least 336 chemical weapons attacks over the course of the Syrian civil war – significantly more than has commonly been known.

Approximately 90 percent of all confirmed attacks occurred after the infamous “red line” incident of August 2013. These findings are very scary and the OPCW needs to keep a constant vigil on the situation in Syria.

**Mr Chairman,**

The OPCW has an interest in developing a culture of prevention. This is possible when the policymakers, the scientific community, non-governmental organisations and the chemical industry work together. Rightfully so, in this regard, the focus of the OPCW has been on education, outreach, international cooperation and training. Also, considerable efforts go into regional and national capacity-building in areas such as emergency response, forensics, and designing and implementing security and safety practices for chemical laboratories.

The chemical industry has been an integral part of the global economy for long. During the last few years, the chemical industry’s total contribution to global GDP has been equivalent to approximately six to seven percent of the world’s total GDP per year. The expanse of this industry is almost global. Obviously, safety and security becomes an issue of paramount importance for this industry. In this regard, I would like to suggest another area for capacity-development which could have particular significance for the chemical industry.

**Mr Chairman,**

For long, the issue of “Human Reliability” is being discussed mainly in the context of the nuclear, aviation and petroleum industries. This is essentially because such industrial sectors demand high standards of safety. However, the rapidly growing chemical industry in the era of Industry 4.0 also needs to be proactive in reducing the possibilities of any chemical mishap. At this backdrop, there is a need to address possible inherent risks of human behaviour or actions or inactions that introduce errors in the operation of a system or process. Human factors can either positively or negatively affect the performance in a workplace. Although, human errors can be minimized through education and training programmes, there are some human actions which could be called as insider actions, these could be intentional, to compromise the safety and security at the workplace due to ideological, economic, political or personal motivations. For this purpose there is a need for a Human Reliability Programme (HRP) which could ensure that individuals who occupy positions with access to critical assets and operations meet the highest standards so that they adhere to safety and security rules and regulations, ensure confidence in individuals based on their character and their physical and mental stability. In this context, the OPCW can take a lead and encourage the chemical industry to identify good practices in safety and security with respect to HRP.

**Mr Chairman,**

Over the years, the CWC and the OPCW have greatly contributed to norm-building against chemical weapons and I am sure they would continue to do so. Threats like the cyber-attacks on the chemical ecosystem require special attention.

Finally, in the end, I thank you Mr Chairman – and thank you all for your kind attention and I wish for this statement to be made part of the final CSP record and posted on the external server and website.