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Mister Chairman, Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, OPCW and CWC Coalition Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is an honour and a pleasure to be with you for the fourth year now, to be able to speak on behalf of our Association in this distinguished conference. Thank you for this opportunity that has come true thanks to the support of Dr. Paul Walker. I must congratulate his perseverance and for involving civil society in the activities of the CWC Coalition.

Needless to say that we reaffirm our adherence to the values of the CWC. We feel fully committed to the principles and aims of CWC, namely eliminating weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties.

Mister Chairman,

I pointed out in my first statement here in 2016 that we do believe there are remains of mustard gas in the Rif's soil and water, dating from the Rif war from 1921 to 1927, as the experts affirm the danger of this gas can last for decades as well as its effects. That was why we appealed to you all to work for eliminating this danger to the inhabitants and the environment. We urged the States Parties to ensure full access to information and military archives, and to guarantee the freedom of investigation of the effects of chemical warfare with the help of experts from all over the world. We thought the OPCW could help in carrying out projects for the aim of detecting contaminated areas, destroying remains of chemical substances, and conducting scientific studies on the long-term effects of mustard gas and the possibility of mutation of cancerous germ cells through genes heredity.

Mister Chairman,

I stood here in 2017 to reiterate the Rifian recommendations concerning first, recognition from the part of the offenders, of the use of chemical weapons against the Rifian civilians.

Second, ensuring free access to the colonizers' military archives. Third, freedom of investigation of the effects of chemical warfare with the help of experts from all over the world. Fourth, making the appropriate reparation to the Rif and its inhabitants, that implies making justice to them. Fifth, carrying out projects for the aim of detecting contaminated areas in the Rif and destroying remains of chemical substances, and conducting scientific studies on the long-term effects of mustard gas and the possibility of mutation of cancerous germ cells through genes heredity.

Mister Chairman,

We presented last year a petition to the Secretary General to send OPCW inspectors to the Rif. It was a heartfelt appeal to the OPCW on behalf of the Rifians to help clarify the situation in the Rif concerning the potential dangers today, of the use of mustard gas during the Rif war between 1921 and 1927.

The Rifians need to be sure that their soil and water are no more contaminated by mustard gas. No one better than the OPCW inspectors can provide decisive and reliable answers.

We had high hopes when we first presented our claims and then our petition; unfortunately we have received no response. Such outcome makes us reconsider the utility of addressing this institution.

Thank you 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.