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Mister Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome the opportunity to speak today in plenary session about the necessity of multidisciplinary approaches towards research on chemical warfare agents.

First a statement of purpose.

A wide variety of researchers and research itself should be supported in order to develop new technologies for combatting chemical weapons.

Let me explain these two related domains.

A scientist can choose different areas to perform research about chemical weapons, such as a toxicologic approach, research on biological units, the effect on the environment and so on. These are highly specialized areas. In order to attract more scientists in these fields, definitely there should be more research capabilities as well as financial incentives.

Secondly, a multidisciplinary approach is a valuable policy in developing new technologies. As the definition states, a “multidisciplinary approach” to curriculum integration focuses primarily on different disciplines and diverse perspectives they bring to illustrate a topic, theme or issue.

Let me share our research experience.

Our research team consists of 6 permanent scientists from different specialties; a forensic pathologist, a pharmacologist, an inorganic chemist, a biochemist, a histologist, and a medical pathologist. Moreover, researchers from different fields join the team in accordance with the actual research. The aim of this research group is to apply different scientific approaches for chemical weapon bio-utilisation and detection. We do not only use toxicological methods, but also analyze epidemiological data and forensic methods.

This team has received three international and one national research grant so far. A wide variety of research has been carried out including epidemiological studies, animal experiments and laboratory studies. The findings are being shared with the scientific community at the moment. Funding scarcity is the main constraint in our research. Not only total grant sums are limited but also the way of spending is limited in most of the occasions.

Similar to our research team, researchers in this field have to tackle insufficient funding. OPCW has wonderful support for small-scale research in peaceful uses of chemistry in Member States that have either developing or transitioning economies. This is a great opportunity for many scientists, however there is room for improvement. Most of the international grant funders do not see chemical weapons research as their primary objective. As a result this research area is neglected in terms of funding.

Once more funds become available in chemical warfare agent research, it will attract a wide variety of researchers.

In conclusion, we need to attract a wide variety of young scientists in order to develop new ways of detecting and controlling chemical warfare agents. New funding strategies for research is the one of the best ways of attracting a diverse group of scientists.

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.