



OPCW

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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A. V. SHULGIN
DEPUTY HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
AGENDA ITEM 14**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates,

The adoption by the Conference of the States Parties of decisions on financial matters is an exclusively important task. The OPCW's budget is a kind of lifeblood for the Organisation, without which it would not be possible for it to function or implement its programmes or, consequently, achieve the goals it has set.

Russia understands the paramount importance of the budget process and always supports the programme activities of the OPCW, and it intends to continue doing so in the future.

In light of the fact that we contribute to the budget, the first task at hand for us is to find a common denominator for OPCW financial matters. Simply put, all decisions on this matter should be taken by consensus, and not by vote.

We do not, under any circumstance, want to leave the Organisation without funds, but we are speaking out against improper methods and approaches when financial obligations for unlawful activities that go beyond the legal framework of the Chemical Weapons Convention are being literally forced upon States Parties.

We are forced to state that the situation surrounding the draft OPCW Programme and Budget for the year 2020 has met an impasse. This has developed due to the efforts of those who, without listening to anyone else's opinion, stubbornly pushed through the so-called omnibus draft, which comprises multiple financial components. We regret that the Executive Council did not take a consensus-based decision on this matter.

The proposal to "unpack" the consolidated budget—which is justified from the standpoint of budgetary discipline and effectiveness—and to separate the issue of the 2017 cash surplus into a separate subject for discussion as is usually done at other international organisations, was ignored. As a result, instead of separate consideration of issues that are not directly related to the Organisation's budget for the year to come, we are being handed an "omnibus"



decision, which does not meet the principles of transparency and accountability of the budget process.

We are in favour of returning unspent cash surpluses to the States Parties. Any other distribution of said resources should be done exclusively with the consent of the members of the Organisation and only based on a consensus. Other expenditures should be included in the OPCW budget, rather than spent under the guise of so-called savings from previous years—which we may not have in future budget periods.

As is known, the Russian Federation and a number of other States Parties espouse the principled position regarding the illegitimacy of the decision on attribution taken in June 2018 at the Special Session of the Conference. As we can see, all of the provisions of the draft budget that concern attribution have been surreptitiously distributed across the entire structure of the proposed financial document. We believe that a budgetary proposal in this format is improper. It is categorically unacceptable to attempt to steamroll things that have no correlation to the implementation of tasks under the Convention into regular budgetary provisions.

In light of the above, we express our disagreement with the draft decision before us on the Organisation's Programme and Budget for the year 2020. We cannot support it in its current form.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

I request that this statement be distributed as an official document of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

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