



THE NETHERLANDS

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PAUL van den IJSSEL

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE

ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

EC-93, 10 – 13 March 2020

Mr Chairperson

My delegation fully supports the statement made on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to add some remarks on behalf of the Netherlands.

Mr Chairperson

Once again, I feel compelled to start my intervention by expressing my great concern about the situation in Syria. For years now we have been discussing the situation in Syria and still, more than six years after Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention it has not given full disclosure of its' chemical weapon programme. Moreover, despite clear evidence, produced earlier by the Joint Investigative Mechanism, Syria still denies any involvement in any of the reported attacks with chemical weapons that occurred on its' soil. In this regard, we very much welcome the decision of the

Fourth Special CSP to mandate the Director General to create the Information and Investigation Team. We hope and expect the IIT will shed further light on who is responsible for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. If that will be the case, Member States should give an adequate response to the report and take action against the perpetrators if and when they are identified by the IIT.

Mr Chairperson,

The Conference of States Parties last year, adopted a historic decision. For the first time in its' existence a new class of extremely dangerous chemicals, the so-called 'novichoks', was added to the Annex of the CWC. In my view a groundbreaking decision for the OPCW and a very important signal that the Member States take the fight against chemical weapons very seriously. My delegation is satisfied this decision was taken by consensus and I hope and expect that this decision will make the world a safer place.

Mr Chairperson

Our colleagues Ambassador Puja of Indonesia and Ambassador Vasquez Gomez of El Salvador did a remarkable job as Co-Facilitators of the Open Ended Working Group. My delegation

stands ready to continue to work based on their determination and contribute to further discussions in a constructive spirit.

However, as I stated before, it is important that we will not fall into the trap of making progress on one issue a condition for making progress on a different issue, because that will mean progress on any issue will become virtually impossible.

Mr Chairperson,

My delegations welcomes the fact that already many member states have made a voluntary contribution to the new OPCW-laboratory or the Chem Tech Centre. In this regard, we very much welcome the announcements this morning by Germany and the Republic of Korea. It is important that other member states that are in a position to do so, contribute to this project, as the new lab will benefit all of us. My delegation is looking forward to the presentation of the Technical Secretariat on the development of the project.

Mr Chairperson,

My last point. As many other delegations before, I would like to express my support for the initiative to achieve a full ban of the use of CNS-aC's for law enforcement purposes.

Thank you.

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