



Embassy of Finland
The Hague

**Statement on behalf of the Republic of Finland
Delivered by Ambassador Päivi Kaukoranta, Permanent
Representative of Finland to the OPCW,
At the Ninety-Third Meeting of the Executive Council of the OPCW
The Hague, 10 March 2020**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. In addition, allow me to highlight a few issues from a national perspective.

Mr Chairperson,

Let me begin by reiterating my country's strong support to the OPCW Technical Secretariat and its various teams. Finland has full confidence in the professionalism and impartiality of the Fact-Finding Mission, the Declaration Assessment Team and the Investigation and Identification Team. As an indication of our steadfast support, I am pleased to inform the Council that Finland has decided to make a new contribution of 100 000 euros to the OPCW Trust Fund for Syria Missions.

As we heard in a briefing last week, there are still many outstanding issues with regard to the declaration on the Syrian chemical weapons programme. We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to fulfil without any further delay its declaration obligations and to cooperate fully with the OPCW.

For upholding the norm against the use of chemical weapons, achieving accountability is essential. The forthcoming reports of the IIT will be an important step in that direction. It is important that the necessary

conclusions be drawn from the findings of the reports, leading to appropriate next steps.

Mr Chairperson,

As announced by Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto during his visit to the OPCW in December, Finland will make a financial contribution of 100 000 euros also to the new OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology. Enhancing the capabilities of the Organisation and national capacity building of the States Parties are both essential for achieving the aims of the Convention. Through the Finnish Institute for the Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention, VERIFIN, Finland has contributed by training more than 1400 chemists from over 130 countries over the last three decades. We stand ready to share our expertise also in the future.

Finally, Mr Chairperson,

Finland supports the joint paper on the use of aerosolized central nervous system acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes and is a co-sponsor of the draft decision presented by Australia, Switzerland and the United States. Given the risks involved, we find it important to make clear that the use of these chemicals for law enforcement purposes is prohibited under the CWC. We look forward to discussion on this issue.

In concluding, I kindly request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the external server and public website.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.