



REPORT OF THE NINETY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. AGENDA ITEM ONE – Opening of the session

The Chairperson of the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”), Ambassador Andrea Perugini of Italy, opened its Ninety-Third Session in The Hague at 10:03 on 10 March 2020.

2. AGENDA ITEM TWO – Adoption of the agenda

The Council **considered** and **adopted** the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Opening statement by the Director-General
4. Reports by the Vice-Chairpersons on the activities conducted under their respective clusters of issues
5. General debate
6. Status of implementation of the Convention:
 - (a) Reports by the Director-General on destruction-related issues
 - (b) Implementation of the Conference of the States Parties and Executive Council decisions on destruction-related issues
 - (c) Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme
 - (d) Other verification-related issues
 - (e) Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use
 - (f) Technical Secretariat’s activities: update on the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria
 - (g) Timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Convention
 - (h) Implementation by the Technical Secretariat in 2019 of the regime governing the handling of confidential information
 - (i) Status of implementation of the Verification Information System



7. Countering chemical terrorism
8. Administrative and financial matters:
 - (a) Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters
 - (b) Report of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters
 - (c) Nominations for membership of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters
 - (d) Status of implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations
 - (e) Report on the status of implementation of the enterprise resource planning system
 - (f) New External Auditor of the OPCW
 - (g) Adjustment to the Director-General's gross salary
9. The OPCW Programme for Africa
10. Follow-up process to the Third Review Conference¹
11. Election of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council
12. Report by the Committee on Relations with the Host Country
13. Any other business
14. Adoption of the report
15. Closure

3. AGENDA ITEM THREE – Opening statement by the Director-General

The Council **noted** the opening statement by the Director-General (EC-93/DG.16, dated 10 March 2020).

4. AGENDA ITEM FOUR – Reports by the Vice-Chairpersons on the activities conducted under their respective clusters of issues

- 4.1 The Vice-Chairpersons and coordinators for clusters of issues reported to the Council on informal consultations held during the intersessional period: Ambassador Jorge Skinner-Klée Arenales of Guatemala on chemical weapons issues, Ambassador Brândușa Predescu of Romania on chemical industry and other Article VI issues, Mr Marcin Kawałowski of Poland (on behalf of Ambassador Kamal Bashir Ahmed of the Sudan) on administrative and financial issues, and Ambassador Alireza Kazemi Abadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran on legal, organisational, and other issues.

¹ Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

- 4.2 The following facilitators also reported on the consultations carried out during the intersessional period: Mr Martin Pizinger of the Czech Republic on the status of implementation of Article X and Ambassador Jorge Skinner-Klée Arenales of Guatemala on the implementation of the action plan for the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”).
- 4.3 The co-facilitator on organisational governance issues, Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador, also on behalf of Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia, reported to the Council on consultations they held during the intersessional period (EC-93/WP.1, dated 10 March 2020).
- 4.4 The Council **expressed appreciation** for the work done by the outgoing facilitators Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador and Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia, and **welcomed** the appointment of the new facilitators on organisational governance issues – Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus of Australia and Ambassador Laura Dupuy Lasserre of Uruguay.

5. AGENDA ITEM FIVE – General debate

- 5.1 The following delegations made statements during the general debate: Croatia (observer) (on behalf of the European Union), Azerbaijan (observer) (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China), the Sudan (on behalf of the African Group), Iraq, Spain (observer), China, France, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Chile, New Zealand (observer), Malta, Sweden (observer), Germany, Canada, Denmark, Austria (observer), Guatemala, Norway (observer), Peru, Australia (observer), Pakistan, Japan, the United States of America, Brazil, Indonesia, Portugal, Cuba (observer), the Netherlands, Panama, Finland (observer), Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Turkey (observer), the Russian Federation, Switzerland (observer), Malaysia (observer), Argentina, Myanmar (observer), the Czech Republic, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (observer), Mexico, Nigeria, and El Salvador (observer).
- 5.2 The following delegations exercised their right of reply: the United States of America, the Russian Federation, Turkey (observer), and the Syrian Arab Republic (observer).
- 5.3 The Council **expressed** concern over the current global outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). In this context, it was advised that this session of the Council be held with the participation of the members of the Permanent Representations to the OPCW based in The Hague and other nearby capitals. In the absence of technical experts from the capitals at the session, the Council **reaffirmed** its commitment to continue the dialogue during the intersessional period on issues on the agenda of the Council that require specific technical and legal input.

6. AGENDA ITEM SIX – Status of implementation of the Convention

Subitem 6(a): Reports by the Director-General on destruction-related issues

- 6.1 Further to a decision by the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.11, dated 1 December 2011), the Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the overall

progress with respect to the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles (EC-93/DG.13, dated 6 March 2020).

- 6.2 Further to the decision by the Council at its Sixty-Seventh Session (EC-67/DEC.6, dated 15 February 2012), the Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the overall progress of the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons (EC-93/DG.15, dated 9 March 2020).

Subitem 6(b): Implementation of the Conference of the States Parties and Executive Council decisions on destruction-related issues

- 6.3 The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) briefed the Council on its destruction-related verification activities.
- 6.4 The United States of America, Japan, and China briefed the Council on their destruction-related activities.
- 6.5 The Council **noted** a voluntary presentation by Italy on the destruction of its old chemical weapons pursuant to Council decision EC-67/DEC.8 (dated 17 February 2012).
- 6.6 The Council **noted** the statements and comments made by States Parties on the destruction of the only remaining declared chemical weapons by the sole possessor State Party, recalling the relevant obligations under the Convention, and relevant decisions by the Conference and the Council. The Council **recalled** that the destruction of the only remaining declared chemical weapons by the sole possessor State Party should continue in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and its Annex on Implementation and Verification, and with the application of the measures contained in decision C-16/DEC.11.
- 6.7 Further to the decision by the Conference at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.11), the Council **considered** and **noted** a national paper by the United States of America on the progress made on the completion of the destruction of its chemical weapons, including information on measures to accelerate such progress, and identifying progress made since the last briefing in order to meet the planned completion date (EC-93/NAT.2, dated 19 February 2020), along with comments on the issue as mentioned above. The Council **noted** the confirmation provided by the delegation of the United States of America that the necessary measures continue to be undertaken in order to meet the planned completion date of September 2023 for its destruction activities, as submitted to the Council at its Sixty-Eighth Session in accordance with subparagraph 3(c) of decision C-16/DEC.11.
- 6.8 Further to the decision by the Council at its Sixty-Seventh Session (EC-67/DEC.6) and the destruction plan beyond the year 2016 for the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China (EC-84/NAT.6, dated 2 March 2017) attached as Annex 2 to Council decision EC-67/DEC.6, and adopted by the Council at its Eighty-Fourth Session (paragraph 6.14 of EC-84/2, dated 9 March 2017), a national paper by China (EC-93/NAT.5, dated 2 March 2020) and a national paper by Japan (EC-93/NAT.1, dated 13 February 2020) on the overall progress of the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China were circulated to the members of the Council.

- 6.9 The Council **recalled** the provisions of the Convention that the Abandoning State Party undertakes to destroy all chemical weapons it abandoned on the territory of another State Party and shall provide all necessary financial, technical, expert, facility as well as other resources, **expressed its determination** to remain seized of the matter, and **urged** the Abandoning State Party to continue to make the fullest possible effort to complete the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China as early as possible in accordance with the Council's decision (EC-67/DEC.6) and its Annex 2 in a faithful manner, and to address challenges including ensuring the safety of people and protecting the environment. The Council **reaffirmed** that the Territorial State Party shall provide appropriate cooperation.
- 6.10 The Council also **reaffirmed** the obligation of the Abandoning State Party to provide all available information including, to the extent possible, the location, type, and quantity as well as information on the abandonment in accordance with relevant provisions of the Convention, so as to facilitate the expedited destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China.
- 6.11 The Council **recalled** that the review of the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons was welcomed by the Third Review Conference and the report of the Third Review Conference (RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013), which reaffirmed the role of the Council, the Conference and the Review Conference with regard to the issues related to the abandoned chemical weapons destruction as defined in the provisions of the Convention and in the Council's decision (EC-67/DEC.6), and **welcomed** the review of this issue by the Fourth Review Conference.

Subitem 6(c): Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

- 6.12 Further to its decision at its Eighty-Third Session (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016), the Council decided to place "Elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme" on the agenda of all future Council sessions until the Council determines that all elements of the Syrian chemical weapons programme have been eliminated.
- 6.13 As stated in the report of the Secretariat (EC-81/DG.5, dated 25 January 2016), all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that had been removed from its territory in 2014 had now been destroyed. The Secretariat has also verified the destruction of all twenty-seven chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic (EC-89/DG.1, dated 24 July 2018).
- 6.14 The Council **noted** five Notes by the Director-General reporting on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme (EC-93/DG.1, dated 23 October 2019; EC-93/DG.3, dated 25 November 2019; EC-93/DG.5, dated 24 December 2019; EC-93/DG.7, dated 24 January 2020; and EC-93/DG.12, dated 24 February 2020 and Corr.1, dated 27 February 2020).
- 6.15 The Council **noted** five national papers by the Syrian Arab Republic on the activities related to the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and their production facilities (EC-93/P/NAT.1, dated 17 October 2019; EC-93/P/NAT.2, dated 19 November 2019; EC-93/P/NAT.3, dated 19 December 2019; EC-93/P/NAT.4, dated 17 January 2020; and EC-93/P/NAT.5, dated 17 February 2020).

6.16 Pursuant to subparagraph 12(a) of its decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Council decided that the Director-General shall regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision. The Council **noted** a report by the Director-General on the matter (EC-93/DG.17, dated 11 March 2020).

6.17 The Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General entitled “Report on the Work of the Declaration Assessment Team” (EC-93/HP/DG.1, dated 6 March 2020). The following delegations made statements: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), the Russian Federation, and Canada.

Subitem 6(d): Other verification-related issues

6.18 The Secretariat briefed the Council on its other verification-related activities.

Subitem 6(e): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

6.19 The Council **noted** the regular report by the Director-General to the Council on progress made in the implementation of the decision of the Conference entitled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018) (EC-93/DG.11, dated 24 February 2020).

Subitem 6(f): Technical Secretariat’s activities: update on the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

6.20 The delegation of the Russian Federation made a statement under this subitem.

Subitem 6(g): Timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Convention

6.21 Further to a decision by the Council at its Fifty-First Session (EC-51/DEC.1, dated 27 November 2007), the Council **noted** a status report by the Director-General on the timely submission by States Parties of declarations under Article VI of the Convention, for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 (EC-93/DG.6, dated 17 January 2020 and Corr.1, dated 24 January 2020).

Subitem 6(h): Implementation by the Technical Secretariat in 2019 of the regime governing the handling of confidential information

6.22 The Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the implementation of the regime governing the handling of confidential information by the Secretariat in 2019 (EC-93/DG.8 C-25/DG.1, dated 11 February 2020).

Subitem 6(i): Status of implementation of the Verification Information System

6.23 The Council **noted** a status report on the Verification Information System (EC-93/S/3, dated 31 January 2020).

7. AGENDA ITEM SEVEN – Countering chemical terrorism

- 7.1 The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Director-General on the status of the OPCW's contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts (EC-93/DG.10, dated 20 February 2020).
- 7.2 The Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Terrorism, Ambassador Oji Nyimenuate Ngofa of Nigeria, briefed the Council on the work of the OEWG during the intersessional period.

8. AGENDA ITEM EIGHT – Administrative and financial matters

Subitem 8(a): Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters

- 8.1 The delegations of Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America submitted a draft decision entitled “OPCW Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters – Rules of Procedure” (EC-92/DEC/CRP.1/Rev.1, dated 4 October 2019).
- 8.2 In accordance with Rule 31 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the delegation of the Russian Federation submitted amendments to the above-mentioned draft decision (EC-92/DEC/CRP.6, dated 4 October 2019).
- 8.3 Subsequently, the sponsoring delegations submitted a revision to the above-mentioned draft decision (EC-92/DEC/CRP.1/Rev.2, dated 10 October 2019).
- 8.4 The Council at its previous session decided to defer the matter until its next regular session.
- 8.5 The delegation of the Russian Federation withdrew its proposal through a note verbale dated 25 February 2020 and submitted new amendments on the matter (EC-93/DEC/CRP.2, dated 21 February 2020), together with an explanatory note to it (EC-93/NAT.3, dated 20 February 2020).
- 8.6 The following delegations made statements under this subitem: the United States of America, the Russian Federation, and Belgium (observer).
- 8.7 The Council **decided** to defer the matter until its next regular session.

Subitem 8(b): Report of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters

- 8.8 Further to its consideration of this issue at its previous sessions, the Council **considered** the report of the Forty-Fifth Session of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF), which took place from 31 July to 3 August 2018 (ABAF-45/1, dated 3 August 2018), and a Note by the Director-General containing comments on the report of the ABAF at that session (EC-89/DG.11, dated 28 August 2018), and **decided** to defer the matter until its next regular session.

8.9 Further to its consideration of this issue at its previous sessions, the Council **considered** the report of the Forty-Sixth Session of the ABAF, which took place from 4 to 7 June 2019 (ABAF-46/1, dated 7 June 2019), and a Note by the Director-General containing comments on the report of the ABAF at that session (EC-91/DG.19*, dated 1 July 2019), and **decided** to defer the matter until its next regular session.

8.10 Further to its consideration of this issue at its previous session, the Council **considered** the report of the Forty-Seventh Session of the ABAF, which took place from 30 July to 2 August 2019 (ABAF-47/1, dated 2 August 2019), and a Note by the Director-General containing comments on the report of the ABAF at that session (EC-92/DG.11, dated 9 September 2019), and **decided** to defer the matter until its next regular session.

8.11 The delegation of the United States of America made a statement under this subitem.

Subitem 8(c): Nominations for membership of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters

8.12 The Council **noted** a Note by the Secretariat on a nomination for membership of the ABAF (EC-93/S/2, dated 22 January 2020), and **appointed** Mr Pankaj Agarwal of India, to replace Mr Shri Giridhar Aramane, retroactive to the date of the letter of nomination for Mr Agarwal (3 January 2020).

Subitem 8(d): Status of implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations

8.13 The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Secretariat on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the External Auditor (EC-93/S/1, dated 15 January 2020).

8.14 The delegation of the Russian Federation made a statement under this subitem.

8.15 The facilitator for this issue, Mr Arata Mizukami of Japan, reported on the consultations held during the intersessional period.

Subitem 8(e): Report on the status of implementation of the enterprise resource planning system

8.16 Further to the decision by the Conference at its Nineteenth Session on the implementation of an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and the establishment of a special fund for this purpose (C-19/DEC.7, dated 3 December 2014), the Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General reporting on the status of implementation of the ERP system (EC-93/DG.14, dated 6 March 2020).

Subitem 8(f): New External Auditor of the OPCW

8.17 The Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General on the new External Auditor of the OPCW (EC-93/DG.4, dated 12 December 2019).

Subitem 8(g): Adjustment to the Director-General's gross salary

- 8.18 In accordance with a decision of the Conference at its First Special Session (C-SS-1/DEC.4, dated 25 July 2002) stipulating that the terms of appointment of the Director-General shall be subject to adjustments by the Council to keep the terms in line with those of other executive heads within the United Nations system, the Council **adopted** a decision adjusting the Director-General's gross salary (EC-93/DEC.1, dated 11 March 2020).

9. AGENDA ITEM NINE – The OPCW Programme for Africa

The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Director-General on the fifth phase of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (EC-93/DG.9, dated 18 February 2020).

10. AGENDA ITEM TEN – Follow-up process to the Third Review Conference

- 10.1 At its Seventy-Third Session (paragraph 13.1 of EC-73/6, dated 19 July 2013), the Council requested the Director-General to submit to each regular session of the Council the updated version of the "Matrix of Actionable Items Identified at the Third Review Conference".
- 10.2 At its Ninety-First Session the Council decided that, following the issuance of the final full version of the Matrix at the Ninety-Second Session of the Council, the Secretariat would produce addenda for all subsequent regular sessions that would encompass only new and relevant developments during the reporting period. The Council **considered** and **noted** the updated Matrix in its new format (EC-93/S/4, dated 26 February 2020).

11. AGENDA ITEM ELEVEN – Election of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council

- 11.1 At its Sixty-Fourth Meeting, and with reference to Rule 6 of its Rules of Procedure, the Council decided to accept a proposal from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC) to switch the rotational order with the Group of Western European and Other States (WEOG). The Council decided that a representative from WEOG would exercise the functions of the Chairperson in the period from 12 May 2019 to 11 May 2020, and a representative from GRULAC would exercise the functions of the Chairperson from 12 May 2020 to 11 May 2021. The decision was made on an exceptional basis and did not create any precedent for the future.
- 11.2 In accordance with Rule 6 of its Rules of Procedure, and with effect from 12 May 2020, the Council **elected** Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador as its new Chairperson for a term of office ending on 11 May 2021, and **elected** as its new Vice-Chairpersons for the same period: Ambassador Abdelouahab Bellouki of Morocco, Ambassador Alireza Kazemi Abadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ambassador Marcin Czepelak of Poland, and Ambassador Matthew Neuhaus of Australia.
- 11.3 The United States of America disassociated itself from the consensus with regard to the election of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a Vice-Chairperson of the Council. The following delegations in response made statements under this agenda item: the

Philippines (observer), the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Syrian Arab Republic (observer).

12. AGENDA ITEM TWELVE – Report by the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

The Chairperson reported to the Council on the status of the work of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

13. AGENDA ITEM THIRTEEN – Any other business

13.1 The draft decision entitled “Understanding Regarding the Aerosolized Use of Central Nervous System-Acting Chemicals for Law Enforcement Purposes”, co-sponsored by Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United States of America, was issued under the symbol of EC-92/DEC/CRP.9/Rev.2 (dated 9 March 2020). The Russian Federation submitted a national paper on the matter (EC-93/NAT.6, dated 6 March 2020).

13.2 The following delegations made statements under this agenda item: Switzerland (observer), Australia (observer), the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, China, the United States of America, Bulgaria, the Republic of Korea, and Canada.

13.3 The Council **considered** the draft decision and **decided** to defer the matter until its next regular session.

14. AGENDA ITEM FOURTEEN – Adoption of the report

The Council **considered** and **adopted** the report of its Ninety-Third Session.

15. AGENDA ITEM FIFTEEN – Closure

The Chairperson closed the session at 12:39 on 12 March 2020.