



### **REPORT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR OJI NYIMENUATE NGOFA CHAIRPERSON OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON TERRORISM TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT ITS NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

1. Mr Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished colleagues, it is my pleasure to provide a short oral report of the meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T) held on 9 March 2020.
2. The group continues to be guided by the Executive Council's October 2017 decision on non-State actors (EC-86/DEC.9, dated 13 October 2017.). To that end, the meeting focused on strengthening legal frameworks to counter chemical terrorism, as well as effectively monitoring and responding to such incidents. Through a presentation from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the meeting aimed to examine the range of international counter-terrorism instruments, and to consider the UNODC's role in supporting their implementation. Delegates were also briefed on the Technical Secretariat's ("the Secretariat") capacities to monitor and analyse incidents and information through its Situation Centre.
3. In his opening remarks, the Director-General highlighted the Secretariat's role in assisting States Parties in preventing and responding to chemical terrorism, as mandated by the Chemical Weapons Convention ("the Convention"). He emphasised the legal measures and international obligations that states rely on to hinder and prosecute acts related to chemical terrorism. He observed that the activities of international organisations must reinforce each other to serve this goal, and encouraged cooperation between organisations, such as the OPCW and the UNODC, that work to counter the threat of chemical terrorism. The Director-General also underlined OPCW programmes to support States Parties in preparing for and responding to chemical attacks, both through capacity building and through the Secretariat's own response capabilities. In this regard, he noted the importance of the Situation Centre in ensuring the Secretariat's situational awareness. This is an important part of the OPCW's ability to address the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors.
4. The working group was then briefed by Mr Joaquin Zuckerberg, programme officer at the UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch. Mr Zuckerberg briefed the Working Group on the UNODC's support for the adoption and implementation of 19 international legal instruments on terrorism, four of which also deal in part with acts involving chemical terrorism. Mr Zuckerberg emphasised the complementary nature of those four instruments and the Convention, and encouraged further cooperation between the UNODC and the OPCW.



5. Following Mr. Zuckerberg's presentation, questions and comments from delegates focused on the different international legal frameworks that address the threat of chemical terrorism. Delegates also pointed to potential cooperation between the UNODC and the OPCW as well as cooperation between the UNODC and other international organisations with respect to international legal counter-terrorism instruments. In my view, there is good potential to strengthen the partnership between the OPCW and the UNODC.
6. The working group was also addressed by Mr Leo Buzzerio, Senior Communication and Information Officer in the Inspectorate Division's Operations and Planning Branch. He briefed the Working Group on the Secretariat's Situation Centre and its role as "the eyes and ears" of the OPCW. Mr Buzzerio explained the Situation Centre's support for OPCW missions and its mandate to ensure the Secretariat has appropriate situational awareness. He highlighted the Centre's important task of providing context for senior decision-makers, and outlined some of the techniques used to monitor and analyse open-source information.
7. At the end of the meeting, I raised with delegations the question of revitalising the work of the OEWG-T, and suggested that a first step in doing so could involve moving the dates of the meetings so that they do not coincide with the sessions of the Council. I invited delegations to provide feedback over the coming weeks on this proposal, along with any other suggestions they may consider useful in ensuring that the Working Group effectively and efficiently delivers on its mandate.
8. I would like to express my appreciation to the delegates, Mr. Zuckerberg and Mr Buzzerio for their participation and presentations. The next meeting of the OEWG-T is scheduled for 6 July 2020.
9. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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