

THE NETHERLANDS

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PAUL van den IJSSEL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE
ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

EC-95 6 - 9 October 2020

Mr Chairman,

In addition to the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Germany on behalf of the EU, we would like to make the following remarks.

In our statement at the previous Executive Council, The Netherlands urged the member states and especially the current members of the Executive Council to support a decision that condemns Syria for its continuing violation of the Convention. Much to our satisfaction, the EC adopted decision EC-94/DEC.2 of 9th July, condemning Syria for the use of chemical weapons and requesting that the Syrian Arab Republic within 90 days redresses the situation as demanded in the decision.

I appeal to Syria to seize this opportunity and fully live up to its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

It is of the utmost importance that member states support the work of the OPCW and enable the IIT to conduct its investigations in full autonomy. The Netherlands has full confidence in the professionalism, impartiality and objectivity of the Director General of the OPCW and the Technical Secretariat. I take this opportunity to reconfirm my country's full support for the work of the Technical Secretariat .

Once again, the global community has been shocked by the use of a very dangerous chemical, apparently from the Novichok group, in what seems to be an attempt on the life of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. The Netherlands calls on the Russian Federation to fully cooperate with investigations and give full disclosure of the circumstances of the events. We are in contact with Germany and are ready to support any further steps.

The Netherlands reiterates its support, as a cosponsor, for the decision on Central Nervous System – acting Agents. We share the assessment of Switzerland, Australia and the United States of America, that CNS-aC's are dangerous, among others, for their indiscriminate effect and we will support further steps to achieve a full ban of the use of CNS-aC's.

The Netherlands would furthermore like to draw the attention of member states to the budget and the fact that it has not increased noteworthy in the last decade, despite the fact that we have burdened the Organisations with more and more tasks. Given the fact that inflation, be it at a very low rate, continues, the purchasing power of the OPCW is decreasing every year, thus undermining its viability and ability to perform the tasks we have asked it to fulfill. In our conviction 'Zero Nominal Growth' is not tenable in the long term and should be reconsidered. Of course, these difficult times may not be the best moment to start a discussion on this issue, but when the pandemic is behind us, we would welcome an exchange of ideas.

Mr Chairman,

Allow me a more general observation at the conclusion of my statement.

Multilateralism continues going through difficult times. Please be assured the Netherlands will remain a staunch supporter of multilateralism, as it is the best

safeguard to maintain peace and prosperity for all. In that spirit we will continue to work together with other member states and the Technical Secretariat.

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