

Dr Nivedita Das Kundu

**Presentation to the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Conference of State Parties,
Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW),
The Hague, The Netherlands**

**Mr Chairman, Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, CWC Coalition Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I feel privileged to make a statement at the session of CSP25.

As we celebrate the 23rd year of the 1997 entry-into-force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), there is a need to note many accomplishments and we should all be grateful for a universal treaty regime, for almost complete abolition of declared chemical weapon stockpiles in eight possessor states, and perhaps most important, the establishment of a world free of deadly chemical agents. Though we are nearing the elimination of declared chemical weapons, now the effort should also be put forward to prevent re-emergence.

Since the early days of this Convention a lot has been done and much praise needs to be noted for the dedicated work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat and its inspectorate. Safe and steady destruction is continuing and the remaining fraction is on track to be destroyed by the year 2023.

Mr. Chairman,

Unfortunately, the threat from chemical weapons is yet to be over. There is an ever-present risk that the harmful chemical agents are still being used. In light of recent events, it is encouraging to note the push made by Canada, the United States of America, and The Netherlands, to add Novichok to Schedule 1 listed chemicals in the CWC, to ensure the treaty remains robust and adaptive to current threats.

Mr. Chairman,

It is commendable to note that OPCW made efforts in engaging various non-governmental stakeholders and improved relations with private, public, and civil actors giving importance to public outreach and civil society's involvement to play a constructive role towards fulfilling the CWC's mandate. The NGO community is pleased to work with all components of the OPCW to ensure that the Convention is fully implemented in a transparent, science-based, and community-inclusive manner. The United Services Institution of India, remains a long-standing supporter of the contribution made by our colleagues at the CWC Coalition.

I thank you Mr Chairman – and thank you all for your kind attention and request for this statement to be made part of the final CSP record and posted on the OPCW website.