

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MARCIN CZEPELAK**  
**HEAD OF THE DELEGATION**  
**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO THE OPCW**  
THE 97<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
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*Mister Chairperson,  
Director General,  
Distinguished Delegates,*

At the outset I would like to congratulate Distinguished Ambassador Abdelouahab Bellouki of Morocco on taking the function as the Executive Council's Chairperson. I can assure His Excellency about full engagement and support of this Delegation in the forthcoming weeks and months.

Aligning with the EU statement, there are **two** specific points I would like to underline in my national capacity.

**Firstly**, on the use of chemical weapons.

The adoption of the CSP decision on addressing the possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic constitutes an important, historical step to ensure full compliance of every State Party with the Convention. It is even more important having in mind:

- a) the recent worrisome and alarming report of the Declaration Assessment Team, that still, after eight years of efforts, is not able to recognize the Syrian declaration to be accurate and complete,
- b) and the conclusions of the second report of the Investigation and Identification Team that confirms yet another incident of use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Air Force.

In a similar vein we remain concerned with yet another breach of the CWC as shown by **the last year's use of toxic chemical – a military-grade nerve agent of the "Novichok" group** – as a weapon against a Russian oppositionist. It is an absolute necessity to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation in this

regard and further consider how to address this issue and related implications for the Convention and international security.

As reiterated many times before: Poland strongly condemns any use of chemical weapons. We support all efforts by the international community to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Those responsible for violating the CWC must be held accountable. Accordingly, we reiterate our full support for the activities of the OPCW and have full confidence in their objectivity, independence and professionalism.

**Secondly**, on the functioning of the Organization.

Our efforts in forthcoming months should definitely focus on ensuring that the Organization remains relevant and able to conduct business in a dynamic, unforeseen international environment, underpinned by challenges related to COVID-19 pandemic. This assumption determines our approach to the presented **draft OPCW programme and budget for 2022-2023**, which should provide in today's demanding circumstances an effective and balanced framework for continuing the whole spectrum of the OPCW activities, critical to implementation of all pillars of the Convention, and acceptable for the States Parties.

Furthermore, we are looking forward to successful completion of efforts regarding possible ways of **organizing the OPCW Policy Making Organs' sessions and meetings in emergency situations**.

In the run up to the next CWC Review Conference these shall bring benefits both for the OPCW and all its members and ensure effective operating of the Organization in the 21 century world.

*Thank you!*