



**REPORT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR VUSIMUZI PHILEMON MADONSELA
CHAIRPERSON OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON TERRORISM
TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT ITS NINETY-SEVENTH SESSION**

1. Mr Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished colleagues, it is my pleasure to provide a short oral report on the meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T) held on 5 July 2021.
2. For the third consecutive occasion, the Working Group met in an online format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to thank all delegates for their participation, which underlines the continued importance of the OPCW in countering chemical terrorism.
3. The focus of the Working Group continues to be on the implementation of the decision of the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) on non-State actors (EC-86/DEC.9, dated 13 October 2017). The decision recognises that the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention contributes to addressing the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors. It also underscores the role of the OPCW in preventing and responding to the threat posed by the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors.
4. The meeting therefore concentrated on the capacity-building activities of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to assist States Parties in strengthening their legislative and regulatory frameworks on chemical security, and also examined the role of the International Chemical Trade Association (ICTA) as a stakeholder in this regard.
5. In his opening remarks, the Director-General noted that while the Secretariat has traditionally offered, and will continue to offer, capacity-building activities in the area of chemical safety and security management, new courses focusing on legislative and regulatory issues in this area have been developed more recently. He observed that this is an example of how the Secretariat flexibly adapts its programmes to the evolving needs of States Parties. He further noted that the chemical industry, including related actors such as chemical traders and distributors, is a key stakeholder in the effort to achieve chemical security, and for this reason in 2020 the OPCW formalised its long-standing relationship with ICTA through an exchange of letters.
6. The Working Group was then briefed by Ms Sharon Rivera, Programme Officer (Legal) from the Implementation Support Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA), who described how the Secretariat is building capacity to counter chemical terrorism by strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks on chemical security. Ms Rivera referred to the integrated approach of the ICA in response to increased requests by States Parties for assistance. She referred, in particular, to



specific activities undertaken by the Secretariat, culminating in two recent courses held online for States Parties in Africa and Asia, respectively. Ms Rivera mentioned plans for a further course to be held in the French language during the third quarter of 2021. She also referred to the importance of partnering with the chemical industry in the provision of capacity building in this area, and to the role played by ICTA.

7. Addressing the way forward, Ms Rivera identified two focus areas: the development of tools for legislative assistance, and engagement with key stakeholders. Finally, she referred to plans for a series of meetings to develop a reference legal text on chemical security, which will be a State Party-led process with substantive support from the Secretariat, also due to begin in the third quarter of 2021.
8. This was followed by a briefing by Mr Willem van Lanschot, Secretary to ICTA. Describing ICTA as a crucial link between consumers and producers, Mr van Lanschot outlined the role and activities of ICTA in the field of chemical security. In addition, he described ICTA's partnership with the OPCW, including the rationale for the formalisation of the relationship in 2020, as well as ongoing and future collaboration in capacity-building activities. Mr van Lanschot described ICTA's role in the chemical industry supply chain, the challenges facing the global chemical distribution sector with regard to the illicit use of chemicals, and the importance of continuously improving environmental, health, safety, and security performance. Noting that the OPCW has increased its focus on risks pertaining to non-State actors and the relationship with supply chain responsibility, Mr van Lanschot stated that ICTA is open and willing to contribute further to the work of the OPCW.
9. Following the presentations, a question on ICTA's approach to partnering with States on safety and security was posed by a delegation. ICTA responded that its partnership focus is typically with companies acting along the chemical industry supply chain rather than States.
10. At the end of the meeting, under the item "Any other business", no further issues were raised by delegations.
11. I take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation to the delegates and to the presenters for their participation.
12. The next meeting of the OEWG-T is scheduled to take place prior to the Ninety-Eighth Session of the Council. The date and modalities of the meeting will be communicated closer to the time.
13. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.