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**POLAND**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARCIN CZEPELAK  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO THE  
OPCW AT THE NINETY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr 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 him of the 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 Conference of the States Parties 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 Chemical Weapons Convention ("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 recognise the Syrian declaration to be accurate and complete; and b) and the conclusions of the second report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) 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 Convention 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 Convention 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 Organisation. Our efforts in forthcoming months should definitely focus on ensuring that the Organisation remains relevant and able to conduct business in a dynamic, unforeseen international environment, underpinned by challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This assumption determines our approach to the presented OPCW Draft 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 the successful completion of efforts regarding possible ways of organising the OPCW policy-making organs’ sessions and meetings in emergency situations.

In the run up to the next Review Conference of the States Parties these shall bring benefits both for the OPCW and all its Member States and ensure effective operating of the Organisation in the twenty-first century world.

Thank you.

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