



THE NETHERLANDS

STATEMENT BY

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ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

CSP-26, 29 November – 3 December 2021

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Looking back at last year, we have to conclude that the important issues that were on the agenda last year, are still there. Indeed a milestone action has been taken against the Syrian Arab Republic to encourage it to comply with the Chemical Weapons Convention, but so far with very little result. Syria choose to deny any wrongdoing, in spite of numerous reports of the Technical Secretariat to the contrary and to suspend any cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. On another important issue, the poisoning of Mr Alexei Navalny and the steps to redress the situation, we are still waiting for relevant information about the circumstances from the Russian Federation.

These matters are of grave concern to the Netherlands as they are a sign that in spite of the successful efforts of all OPCW-Member States to achieve the core vision of the Chemical Weapons Convention - "to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons" – the threat of re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons is real. Moreover, let us not forget: in recent years, the world has seen more incidents where chemical weapons were used.

To underline these concerns, the Netherlands has co-signed a statement on Syria's lack of cooperation with the Technical Secretariat, as well as a – repeated – request to the Russian Federation to provide more information about the poisoning of Mr Navalny, as well as a statement on this matter at the CSP 26.

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 also supports a joint Statement on NGO Accreditation to the CSP, because in our view it is crucial that a range of NGO's - as wide as possible - can contribute to the discussions at the CSP in order to strengthen the OPCW. NGO's play a key role in supporting the global fight against the use of chemical weapons. Giving them the possibility to share their expertise is in the interest of all Member States.

The realisation of the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology is well underway, in spite of the challenges of the Covid19 – pandemic. We complement the DG and his team for making a successful start and further progress to the new Chemtech center. The new Centre will be an important cornerstone in the fulfilling of future OPCW tasks. The Netherlands note with satisfaction the broad support by States Parties across all regional groups.

Finally, the Netherlands supports the proposal for the budget for 2022-2023. The OPCW must be funded appropriately to fulfil its functions in the coming years. After several years of 'Zero Nominal Growth' of the budget, a modest increase of the budget is justified to enable the Technical Secretariat to maintain its high standards to the benefit of Member States. The Netherlands therefore calls upon all States Parties to agree to the proposed budget.

To conclude, the Netherlands expresses full confidence in the professionalism and impartiality of the Director-General and Technical Secretariat. We call upon all Member States to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat.

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