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BULGARIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR KONSTANTIN DIMITROV
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA TO THE
OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Bulgaria would like to pay tribute to H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen, Permanent Representative of Norway, as Chairperson of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, and H.E. Ambassador Ziad Al Atiyah, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia, as Chairperson of the Executive Council, for their efforts and outstanding performance in fulfilling their duties. We also congratulate H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela, Permanent Representative of South Africa for his election as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties. My delegation and I assure you of our full support.

We commend the leadership of OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias, and reiterate our full confidence in the OPCW Technical Secretariat, its professionalism, impartiality and expertise in all its activities and the continuous and unfailing assistance rendered to States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (“The Convention”). I would like to assure you that Bulgaria remains committed to further strengthening the Convention and its full implementation globally.

Mr Chairperson, the Republic of Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, its Member States and aligned countries. Nevertheless, in my national capacity I would like to address the Conference of the States Parties with the following additional observations.

Bulgaria is of the firm position that any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, and under any circumstances is a gross violation of international law and is absolutely unacceptable.

This year has completely changed the global security architecture. Russia’s unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine grossly violates the United Nations Charter and constitutes a violent direct attack on the international peace and security. The Republic of Bulgaria condemns the Russian aggression and demands that Russia withdraws all



its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine. We condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's attempts to illegally annex Ukrainian regions. These heinous actions have no legal validity or effect. Furthermore, besides recklessly attacking civilian infrastructure in Ukraine and thus creating a risk of accidents involving industrial chemicals, Russia largely employs its disinformation apparatus to spread baseless accusations about chemical weapons "provocations" carried out in Ukraine. These unfounded accusations against Ukraine, which is a responsible State Party to and in full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, must cease, and so must all other belligerent actions of Russia against the sovereign, free and independent Ukraine.

The Republic of Bulgaria has to note once more that no progress was achieved with regards to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. Almost ten years have passed since the Syrian Arab Republic became a State Party to the Convention, yet the Syrian declaration still cannot be considered accurate and complete. The ongoing failure to issue visas to key OPCW personnel is outrageous and a clear sign that the Syrian authorities are not ready to resolve the identified gaps and inconsistencies. The only way forward is for the Syrian Arab Republic to start fully cooperating with the OPCW. With that in mind, we reiterate our firm support for the work of the Technical Secretariat and urge Syria to act constructively and cooperate responsibly and in good faith with the OPCW.

The Republic of Bulgaria condemns the poisoning of the Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny in August 2020 with a military grade nerve agent of the novichok group. We continue to urge the Russian Federation to provide substantial answers to the questions posed by 45 States Parties, and to disclose without any further delay the circumstances of the assassination attempt against Alexei Navalny. There should be no impunity for those responsible for such horrible attacks.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and post it on both the OPCW external server and public website.

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