



**STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
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EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE**

**AT THE 5th REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES
PARTIES TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
(The Hague, 15 – 19 May 2023)**

Agenda item AoB

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

We wish to express our appreciation for your leadership, diplomatic skills and dedicated efforts throughout the week. We also appreciate the valuable work of the Vice-Chairs and Friends of the Chair as well as the Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole and the Technical Secretariat in support of your effort. We also reiterate our full confidence to the resolute action of Director-General Fernando Arias as the head of our Organisation.

States Parties have collectively and actively contributed to the preparations of Fifth CWC Review Conference for almost a year, and then to its deliberations. We have clearly reaffirmed our support for upholding and fully implementing the Convention in all its aspects.

We regret that despite the commendable efforts by you, Mr. Chairperson, and the intense negotiations over the past days, it has not been possible to achieve consensus on an outcome document that would strengthen the Convention. During the past four days, States Parties have discussed in several formations that

offered the opportunity to make tangible progress. We are very disappointed that, despite our best efforts, the Fifth Review Conference has not been able to seize this opportunity. It is highly regrettable that a very small number of delegations, the Russian Federation amongst them, have not been willing to reach the same level of constructiveness and flexibility displayed by the vast majority of States Parties during the Conference.

The EU has been working hard to reach consensus on all open issues. Reaching consensus was bound to be difficult, but we had been encouraged by the transparent and inclusive work done in the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparations of the Fifth Review Conference (OEWG-RC), under the commendable leadership of its Chairperson. With the compromises made, we could have accepted the provisional document provided by the Chairperson of the OEWG-RC as a package.

The Convention's continued vitality and the preservation of the global norm against the use of chemical weapons is more important than ever in the current security environment. The Convention will remain a fundamental component of the international non-proliferation regime.

We are willing to move forward the work in the Conference of States Parties and the Executive Council to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and to enhance international cooperation to that end, building on positive progress achieved in the OEWG-RC5 and this Review Conference. The ChemTech Centre will serve as a force-multiplier in verification and capacity-building. The EU will spare no effort to continue to promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention, as well as its universalisation, We call upon all States Parties to do the same. We pledge to continue our support to the OPCW and its activities.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the Review Conference and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.