



### REPORT OF THE 103RD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

#### 1. AGENDA ITEM ONE – Opening of the session

The Chairperson of the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”), Ambassador Lucian Fătu of Romania, opened the 103rd Session of the Council at 10:02 on 11 July 2023.

#### 2. AGENDA ITEM TWO – Adoption of the agenda

The Council **considered** and **adopted** the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Replacement of the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Council from the Asian Group
4. Opening statement by the Director-General
5. Reports by the Vice-Chairpersons on the activities conducted under their respective clusters of issues
6. General debate
7. Status of implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention:
  - (a) Reports by the Director-General on destruction-related issues
  - (b) Implementation of the Conference of the States Parties and Executive Council decisions on destruction-related issues
  - (c) Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme
  - (d) Other verification-related issues
  - (e) Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use
  - (f) Timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Chemical Weapons Convention
  - (g) Article VII: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat



- (h) The content of the Protection and Assistance Databank and its use
  - (i) Article X: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat
  - (j) Article XI: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat
  - (k) Report by the Director-General on the Technical Secretariat's readiness to conduct a challenge inspection or an investigation of alleged use
8. Countering chemical terrorism
  9. Draft annual report of the OPCW on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2022
  10. Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight:
    - (a) Implementation in 2022 of the recommendations contained in the 2021 annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight
    - (b) Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022
  11. Administrative and financial matters:
    - (a) Report of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters
    - (b) Transfers of funds during 2022
    - (c) Report on the status of implementation of the enterprise resource planning system
    - (d) Composition of the Technical Secretariat
    - (e) Implementation of the tenure policy
  12. Follow-up to the Review Conferences<sup>1</sup>
  13. Credentials of representatives of the members of the Executive Council
  14. Provisional agenda for the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference of the States Parties
  15. Dates for the regular sessions of the Executive Council in 2024
  16. Any other business
  17. Adoption of the report
  18. Closure

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<sup>1</sup> Review Conference = Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

**3. AGENDA ITEM THREE – Replacement of the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Council from the Asian Group**

Further to the end of mission of Ambassador Nazar Issa Abdulhadi Al-Khirullah of Iraq prior to the expiry of his term of office as Vice-Chairperson of the Council from the Asian Group, the Council, in accordance with Rules 6 and 8 of its Rules of Procedure, **elected** Ambassador Hiroshi Minami of Japan as Vice-Chairperson for the unexpired term of office until 11 May 2024.

**4. AGENDA ITEM FOUR – Opening statement by the Director-General**

The Council **noted** the opening statement by the Director-General (this document will be assigned an official reference number when it is made available to delegations).

**5. AGENDA ITEM FIVE – Reports by the Vice-Chairpersons on the activities conducted under their respective clusters of issues**

5.1 The Vice-Chairpersons and coordinators for clusters of issues reported to the Council on informal consultations held during the intersessional period: Ambassador Eniola Olaitan Ajayi of Nigeria on chemical industry and other Article VI issues; Ambassador Giorgio Novello of Italy on legal, organisational, and other issues; and Ambassador Paulo Roberto Caminha de Castilhos França of Brazil on administrative and financial issues.

5.2 The Council **expressed appreciation** for the work done by the outgoing facilitators, Ms Bianca Müller of Germany for her work as facilitator for chemical industry and other Article VI-related issues, and Ms Yoko Sakurai of Japan for her work as facilitator for the Office of Internal Oversight and the External Auditor. The Council **welcomed** Ms Sandra Rodríguez of Peru as facilitator for Article VII-related issues, Mr Lesther Antonio Ortega Lemus of Guatemala as facilitator for issues related to the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), and Ms Martina Filippiová of the Czech Republic as facilitator for Article X-related issues.

**6. AGENDA ITEM SIX – General debate**

6.1 The following delegations made statements under this agenda item: Azerbaijan (observer) (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China), Ghana (on behalf of the African Group), Spain (observer) (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, and Ukraine), Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia (observer), Brazil, Burkina Faso (observer), Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba (observer), El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia (observer), Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand (observer), Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway (observer), Pakistan, Poland (observer), Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the State of Palestine (observer), Sweden (observer), Switzerland (observer), the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), Türkiye, Ukraine (observer), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (observer).

6.2 The delegation of the Russian Federation exercised its right of reply.

**7. AGENDA ITEM SEVEN – Status of implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

**Subitem 7(a): Reports by the Director-General on destruction-related issues**

- 7.1 Further to a decision by the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its Sixteenth Session (C-16/DEC.11, dated 1 December 2011), the Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the overall progress with respect to the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles (EC-103/DG.15, dated 3 July 2023).
- 7.2 The delegation of Spain (observer) made a statement on behalf of the European Union.
- 7.3 Further to a decision by the Council at its Sixty-Seventh Session (EC-67/DEC.6, dated 15 February 2012), the Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the overall progress in the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons (EC-103/DG.18, dated 7 July 2023).

**Subitem 7(b): Implementation of the Conference of the States Parties and Executive Council decisions on destruction-related issues**

- 7.4 The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) provided updates to the Council on its destruction-related verification activities and on Article III-related submissions (the presentations were posted on the external server of the OPCW).
- 7.5 The delegation of the United States of America provided an update to the Council on its destruction-related activities, including on the completion of the destruction of all its declared chemical weapons stockpiles (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).
- 7.6 The following delegations made statements: the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation.
- 7.7 The delegations of Japan and China provided updates to the Council on their destruction-related activities (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).
- 7.8 Further to Conference decision C-16/DEC.11, the Council **considered** and **noted** a national paper by the United States of America on the progress achieved towards complete destruction of its chemical weapons stockpile, including information on measures to accelerate such progress, and identifying progress made since the last briefing in order to meet the planned completion date. This report included reporting on any specific measures undertaken to overcome problems in the destruction programme (EC-103/NAT.2, dated 22 June 2023).
- 7.9 The Council **considered** and **noted** the initial report of the visit by the Chairperson of the Council, the Director-General, and representatives of the Council to the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, Kentucky, the United States of America, from 12 to 14 June 2023 (EC-103/2, dated 7 July 2023).

- 7.10 Further to Council decision EC-67/DEC.6 and the destruction plan beyond the year 2022 for the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China (EC-101/DEC.2, dated 4 October 2022), attached as annex 3 to Council decision EC-67/DEC.6, a national paper by China (EC-103/NAT.3, dated 28 June 2023) and a national paper by Japan (EC-103/NAT.1, dated 22 June 2023) on the overall progress of the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China were circulated to the members of the Council.

**Subitem 7(c): Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme**

- 7.11 Further to its decision at its Eighty-Third Session (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016), the Council decided to place “Elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme” on the agenda of all future Council sessions until the Council determines that all elements of the Syrian chemical weapons programme have been eliminated.
- 7.12 As stated in the Note by the Director-General EC-81/DG.5 (dated 25 January 2016), all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that had been removed from its territory in 2014 have been destroyed. The Secretariat has also verified the destruction of all 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic (EC-89/DG.1, dated 24 July 2018).
- 7.13 The Secretariat provided a briefing to the States Parties on 3 July 2023 on its activities related to the Syrian Arab Republic, including on the activities of the Declaration Assessment Team, the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria, and the Investigation and Identification Team.
- 7.14 The Council **noted** four reports by the Director-General reporting on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme (EC-103/DG.2, dated 24 March 2023; EC-103/DG.3, dated 25 April 2023; EC-103/DG.6, dated 24 May 2023, and EC-103/DG.11, dated 23 June 2023).
- 7.15 The Council **noted** four national papers by the Syrian Arab Republic on the activities related to the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and their production facilities (EC-103/P/NAT.1, dated 20 March 2023; EC-103/P/NAT.2, dated 15 April 2023; EC-103/P/NAT.3, dated 15 May 2023; and EC-103/P/NAT.4, dated 15 June 2023).
- 7.16 The Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General entitled “Report on the Work of the Declaration Assessment Team” (EC-103/HP/DG.1, dated 6 July 2023).
- 7.17 The Secretariat circulated a Note by the Secretariat entitled “Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission Regarding Incidents of Alleged Use of Toxic Chemicals as a Weapon in Kharbit Massasneh, Syrian Arab Republic, on 7 July and 4 August 2017” (S/2186/2023, dated 28 June 2023).
- 7.18 The following delegations made statements: China, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, France, Chile, Türkiye, Japan, Ireland, the United States of America, Spain (observer) (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Türkiye, and Ukraine), the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (observer), and Australia (observer).
- 7.19 The Director-General made a statement.

**Subitem 7(d): Other verification-related issues**

- 7.20 The Secretariat updated the Council on its other verification-related activities (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).
- 7.21 Further to the decision of the Council at its Sixty-Sixth Session on the policy guidelines for determining the number of Article VI inspections (EC-66/DEC.10, dated 7 October 2011), the Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General on the results of the eleventh year of implementation of these policy guidelines (EC-103/DG.1, dated 24 March 2023).

**Subitem 7(e): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use**

- 7.22 The Council **noted** the regular report by the Director-General to the Council on progress made in the implementation of the decision of the Conference entitled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018) (EC-103/DG.13, dated 26 June 2023).
- 7.23 The following delegations made statements: Canada, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran, France, Albania, China, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), the Czech Republic (observer), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (observer), and Australia (observer).
- 7.24 The delegation of Canada exercised its right of reply.
- 7.25 The following delegations made statements on other issues under this agenda item: Germany, Spain (observer) (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, and Ukraine), Italy, France, Canada (on behalf of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand), Japan, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, China, Albania, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), Ukraine (observer), and the Czech Republic (observer).
- 7.26 The following delegations exercised their right of reply: the Russian Federation, Ukraine (observer), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Germany.

**Subitem 7(f): Timely submission of declarations under Article VI of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

- 7.27 Further to a decision by the Council at its Fifty-First Session (EC-51/DEC.1, dated 27 November 2007), the Council **noted** a status report by the Director-General on the timely submission by States Parties of declarations under Article VI of the Chemical Weapons Convention for the period 1 January to 31 May 2023 (EC-103/DG.10, dated 16 June 2023).

**Subitem 7(g): Article VII: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat**

- 7.28 The Secretariat circulated a presentation on the status of implementation of Article VII (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).

**Subitem 7(h): The content of the Protection and Assistance Databank and its use**

- 7.29 The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Secretariat on the content of the Protection and Assistance Databank and its use (EC-103/S/2, dated 16 June 2023).

**Subitem 7(i): Article X: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat**

- 7.30 The Secretariat circulated a presentation on the status of implementation of Article X (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).

- 7.31 The facilitator for Article X-related matters, Ms Martina Filippiová of the Czech Republic, reported to the Council on the consultations carried out during the intersessional period (the report was posted on the external server of the OPCW).

**Subitem 7(j): Article XI: briefings by the facilitator and by the Technical Secretariat**

- 7.32 The Secretariat circulated a presentation on the programme of activities for 2023 in relation to Article XI (the presentation was posted on the external server of the OPCW).

**Subitem 7(k): Report by the Director-General on the Technical Secretariat's readiness to conduct a challenge inspection or an investigation of alleged use**

- 7.33 The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Director-General reporting on the readiness of the Secretariat to conduct a challenge inspection or an investigation of alleged use (EC-103/DG.17, dated 6 July 2023).

**8. AGENDA ITEM EIGHT – Countering chemical terrorism**

- 8.1 The Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T), Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela of South Africa, briefed the Council on the work of the OEWG-T during the intersessional period.

- 8.2 The following delegations made statements: the Russian Federation, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, China, the United States of America, and Canada.

- 8.3 The delegations of the Syrian Arab Republic (observer) and Canada exercised their right of reply.

**9. AGENDA ITEM NINE – Draft annual report of the OPCW on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2022**

- 9.1 The Council **considered** the “Draft Report of the OPCW on the Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction in 2022” (EC-103/CRP.1\*, dated 27 June 2023).
- 9.2 The following delegations made statements: the Russian Federation, Spain (observer) (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, and Ukraine), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), China, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- 9.3 The Council **submitted** the Draft Report of the OPCW (EC-103/CRP.1\*, dated 27 June 2023) to the Conference for consideration at its Twenty-Eighth Session.
- 9.4 The delegations of the Russian Federation, China, and the Islamic Republic of Iran dissociated themselves from the submission to the Conference of the above-mentioned Draft Report in its current form.

**10. AGENDA ITEM TEN – Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight**

- 10.1 The facilitator for informal consultations on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight and the External Auditor, Ms Yoko Sakurai of Japan, reported to the Council on the consultations carried out during the intersessional period (the report was posted on the external server of the OPCW).

**Subitem 10(a): Implementation in 2022 of the recommendations contained in the 2021 annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight**

- 10.2 The Council **considered** and **noted** a Note by the Director-General on the implementation in 2022 of the recommendations contained in the 2021 annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight (EC-103/DG.7, dated 1 June 2023).

**Subitem 10(b): Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022**

- 10.3 The Council **considered** and **noted** the annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022 (EC-103/DG.8 C-28/DG.3, dated 1 June 2023), which the Director-General submitted to it, along with his comments. In accordance with Financial Regulation 12.5, the Director-General transmitted the report, along with his own comments and any other comments made by the Council, to the Conference at its Twenty-Eighth Session.



**11. AGENDA ITEM ELEVEN – Administrative and financial matters**

**Subitem 11(a): Report of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters**

- 11.1 The Council **considered** and **noted** the report of the Fifty-Fourth Session of the ABAF, which took place from 6 to 8 June 2023 (ABAF-54/1, dated 8 June 2023), and a Note by the Director-General containing comments on the report of the ABAF at that session (EC-103/DG.16, dated 6 July 2023).

**Subitem 11(b): Transfers of funds during 2022**

- 11.2 The Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General on transfers of funds during 2022 (EC-103/DG.5 C-28/DG.2, dated 31 May 2023).

**Subitem 11(c): Report on the status of implementation of the enterprise resource planning system**

- 11.3 Further to the decision by the Conference at its Nineteenth Session on the implementation of an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and the establishment of a special fund for this purpose (C-19/DEC.7, dated 3 December 2014), the Council **noted** a Note by the Director-General reporting on the status of implementation of the ERP system (EC-103/DG.9, dated 12 June 2023).

**Subitem 11(d): Composition of the Technical Secretariat**

- 11.4 The Council **noted** the Director-General's annual report on the composition of the Secretariat (EC-103/DG.12, dated 26 June 2023).

**Subitem 11(e): Implementation of the tenure policy**

- 11.5 The Council **considered** and **noted** a report by the Director-General on the implementation of the tenure policy in 2022 (EC-103/DG.4, dated 8 May 2023).
- 11.6 The following delegations made statements: the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, North Macedonia, the Republic of Korea, India, Spain (observer), France, Japan, Italy, Chile, Guatemala, Finland, Ghana (on behalf of the African Group), the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, the Russian Federation, Algeria, the United States of America, Brazil, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, China, El Salvador, Belgium (observer), and Australia (observer).
- 11.7 Following the discussion on the tenure policy, the Council **established** a facilitation on the matter with the aim of preparing a recommendation to the next session of the Conference.
- 11.8 The following delegations made further statements: Chile, Guatemala, Argentina, Ghana, France, Colombia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation, China, and Mexico.

## **12. AGENDA ITEM TWELVE – Follow-up to the Review Conferences**

- 12.1 At its Seventy-Third Session (paragraph 13.1 of EC-73/6, dated 19 July 2013), the Council requested the Director-General to submit to each regular session of the Council the updated version of the “Matrix of Actionable Items Identified at the Third Review Conference”. The Council **considered** and **noted** the updated Matrix document (EC-103/S/1, dated 13 June 2023) and **decided** that the Secretariat would cease preparing, updating, and issuing the above-mentioned document with the aim of using the Secretariat’s resources in the most efficient manner.
- 12.2 A working paper entitled “Reflections by H.E. Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast Chairperson of the Fifth Review Conference on the Outcome of the Fifth Review Conference” was circulated under the symbol EC-103/WP.1 (dated 26 June 2023).
- 12.3 The delegation of the Netherlands made a statement.

### **OPCW engagement with civil society**

- 12.4 Germany submitted a working paper entitled “Follow-up to the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention – Engagement with Civil Society” (EC-103/WP.2, dated 4 July 2023).
- 12.5 The Secretariat circulated a Note entitled “OPCW Engagement with Civil Society: Discussion Paper” (EC-103/S/4, dated 10 July 2023).
- 12.6 The following delegations made statements: Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Chile, Rwanda, North Macedonia, Japan, Italy, Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Albania, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Russian Federation, Ghana, China, France, the United States of America, Finland, Norway (observer), Austria (observer), the Syrian Arab Republic (observer), New Zealand (observer), and Australia (observer).

### **Gender equality and parity at the Technical Secretariat**

- 12.7 The Secretariat circulated a Note entitled “Report on Gender Equality and Parity at the OPCW Technical Secretariat” (EC-103/S/3, dated 10 July 2023).
- 12.8 The delegation of Ireland made a statement on behalf of Canada, Chile, Colombia, Finland, Ireland, Mexico, Sweden (observer), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

### **Geographical representation**

- 12.9 A draft decision entitled “Establishment of a Working Group on Geographical Representation” was submitted by Chile on behalf of States Parties from Latin America and the Caribbean (EC-103/DEC/CRP.1, dated 10 July 2023). In accordance with Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the Secretariat circulated a report by the Director-General on the financial, administrative, and programme and budget implications of the proposal (EC-103/DG.19, dated 11 July 2023).

12.10 The following delegations made statements: Chile, Guatemala, India, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ghana (on behalf of the African Group), Rwanda, Malaysia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Kenya, Germany, France, Algeria, Colombia, Belgium (observer), and Australia (observer).

12.11 The Council **adopted** the decision (EC-103/DEC.1, dated 12 July 2023).

**Chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China**

12.12 The following delegations made statements: China and Japan.

**13. AGENDA ITEM THIRTEEN – Credentials of representatives of the members of the Executive Council**

The Council **considered** and **approved** a report by the Director-General on the credentials of representatives of the members of the Council, which covers the credentials of the newly elected members of the Council (EC-103/DG.20, dated 11 July 2023).

**14. AGENDA ITEM FOURTEEN – Provisional agenda for the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference of the States Parties**

The Council **drew up** the provisional agenda for the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference (EC-103/DG.14, dated 29 June 2023).

**15. AGENDA ITEM FIFTEEN – Dates for the regular sessions of the Executive Council in 2024**

The Council **decided** that the 105th Session of the Council shall be held from 5 to 8 March 2024, that the 106th Session of the Council shall be held from 9 to 12 July 2024, and that the 107th Session of the Council shall be held from 8 to 11 October 2024.

**16. AGENDA ITEM SIXTEEN – Any other business**

The following delegations made statements: the Russian Federation, South Africa (on behalf of the African Group), Pakistan, China, Türkiye, and Chile.

**17. AGENDA ITEM SEVENTEEN – Adoption of the report**

The Council **considered** and **adopted** the report of its 103rd Session.

**18. AGENDA ITEM EIGHTEEN – Closure**

The Chairperson closed the session at 17:12 on 13 July 2023.