

Statement by Germany at the 106th OPCW Executive Council under agenda item 18

“Any Other Business – on Artificial Intelligence”

Rethinking Arms Control: Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Weapons of Mass Destruction, Berlin 28 June 2024

Germany aligns itself with the EU statement on AI delivered by Hungary, representing the EU-Presidency.

On 28 June 2024, the German Federal Foreign Office welcomed up to 160 national and international participants at a **Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Weapons of Mass Destruction** in order to assess the effects of Artificial Intelligence on Nuclear, Biological and Chemical weapons. The conference was part of Germany’s well-established “Capturing Technology – Rethinking Arms Control” conference series which looks at the impact of new technologies on arms control and tries to identify possible lines of action in response.

We are honored that Director General Arias held the keynote speech, demonstrating his early and proactive engagement on the subject. We are also grateful that many colleagues from The Hague made the trip to Berlin to enrich the debate.

In a **panel dedicated to the question of the consequences of the use of AI for chemical weapon disarmament and non-proliferation**, the former OPCW Head of Laboratory, Marc-Michael Blum, the professor for computer-assisted drug design at ETH Zurich Gisbert Schneider and the Deputy Head at Spiez Laboratory, Stefan Mogl considered the risks of AI as well as its potential advantages. The panelists shared the view that AI does not act as a weapon by itself, but that its effect depended entirely on the intent of its use. Especially State actors could see a strategic advantage in the use for chemical weapon development, whereas the costs and potential hazards were, at this stage, considered still high for non-State actors.

The conference represents a first step of Germany’s contribution to the debate on the effect of AI and new technologies on preserving the global ban on chemical weapons. **Germany will continue its engagement on the topic by contributing financial support and technical expertise to the OPCW conference on AI planned in Rabat, Morocco in October, which should take the debate forward.** We are grateful to the government of Morocco for hosting this conference. Germany believes in the need for a broad debate among States Parties about the effects of AI and possible need for action, bringing in expertise from academia, industry and other parts of civil society.