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CZECH REPUBLIC

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JANA REINIŠOVÁ
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

The Czech Republic stands fully behind the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, including the congratulations to you, Chairperson of the Twentieth Session of the Conference of the States Parties as well as to the other officers. We also warmly thank the previous Chairperson as well as appreciate the work of the Director-General, Secretariat and all others involved.

The turbulent situation in various parts of the world, the escalation of terrorist activities and new methods used by terrorist groups, remind us all how important it is to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons anywhere in the world, including in the hands of various non-State actors. It goes without saying that the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention is essential and helps prevent threats of this kind. We are therefore glad that the universality of the Convention has approached yet again this year and we may welcome new members to the OPCW.

It is of utmost importance to finalise the challenging tasks of complete destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities in all States Parties, with the Syrian Arab Republic in the first row. We appreciate the work already done in the Syrian Arab Republic. However, reliable information indicates that several problems persist. The recently established OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism, which we welcome, may be the way how the international community may find the truth. We therefore urge the Syrian Arab Republic to provide the JIM as well as all other fact-finding missions their full cooperation in a transparent manner.

We reiterate that utmost attention must be continually paid to the preservation and improvement of the OPCW expertise, in particular to the provisions on industry verification, national implementation and challenge inspections that are vital and indispensable for pursuing the non-proliferation goals of the Convention.

In order to create and keep the verification mechanisms as efficient as possible and to implement the Convention in an effective manner, we need the best possibly educated and



prepared experts and inspectors. The Czech Republic has always been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of the OPCW and we are trying to do our best to these ends. Since 1997, the Czech Republic, in cooperation with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, has been regularly organising training courses. We continue to provide both basic and maintenance training to OPCW inspectors and also specialised training to qualified OPCW experts. Since we are in possession of highly secured facilities, these courses enable training with chemical warfare agents which is very important for the future work of inspectors.

Each state should try to enhance its capacities to fulfil obligations under the Convention and to contribute to our common objective. We believe that through organising the training courses the Czech Republic helps advance the full implementation of the Convention and relieve the world of chemical weapons.

There is a common consensus that OPCW has its place not only in today's world, but also well beyond 2025. We therefore consider it crucial for the Organisation to keep all its expertise, know-how and mechanisms for the future.

The Czech Republic welcomes the launch of the debate on the orientation of the OPCW once the original goals are fulfilled. We support the attention to be paid to terrorism, new scientific technological developments, education, outreach, cooperation with other international organisations, non-State actors, including industry and prevention of chemical disasters. This is not an exhaustive list of its future tasks. We are looking forward to upcoming discussions and activities of newly created bodies working to elaborate further these topics.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Conference and be published on the OPCW website.

Thank you for the attention.

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