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Mr Chairman, Director-General, Excellencies, CWC Coalition Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a pleasure to speak on behalf of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) from New Delhi, India. The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses is a non-partisan, autonomous think-tank dedicated to objective research and policy relevant studies on all aspects of defence, security and strategic studies. Its mission is to promote national and international security through the generation and dissemination of knowledge on defence and security-related issues. IDSA, is a fifty plus years old and one of renowned think-tanks from India.

Research at the Institute is driven by a comprehensive agenda addressing issues related to Security and International Relations. Also, there is a major focus on issues concerning Arms Control and Disarmament. The institute has established a separate Centre which undertakes research and participates in debates on issues concerning the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). Through its various publications, IDSA provides impartial analyses and presents wide ranging policy recommendations.

The Institute publishes a biannual journal called *The CBW Magazine*. This journal has been published since 2007 and is the first of its kind in India. It offers a forum for highlighting and analysing issues concerning chemical and biological weapons.

Mr Chairman,

IDSA has a well-qualified multi-disciplinary research faculty drawn from academia, defence forces and the civil services, representing a diversity of views. Over the years IDSA has emerged as a principle think-tank conducting debates and hosting conferences on both, historical and contemporary aspects of national and international security. The Institute also organises talks by various visiting dignitaries and conduct workshops with several national and international conferences. One year back, on 3rd September 2015, Director-General OPCW had visited IDSA and addressed us on various matters concerning the Chemical Weapons Convention. Recently, my organisation also hosted a regional workshop titled

'Preparing for the Eighth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention' during August 2016 in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Disarmament (UNODA).

Mr Chairman,

The OPCW, 2013 Nobel Peace Prize awardee, deserves credit for handling the Syrian chemical weapons issue very professionally. It is well understood that the Syrian challenge is far from over and OPCW alone cannot handle this challenge. Also, a possible covert CW proliferation by terrorist organisations in the future should not be underestimated. It is heartening to note that the OPCW Executive Council based on the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, that reports about Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic has decided to hold every actor involved in these chemical weapons attacks, accountable.

Mr Chairman,

I come from a country which unfortunately had to experience one of the worst industrial disasters 32 years ago popularly known as the Bhopal Gas Tragedy. At the backdrop of this I find the efforts made by OPCW in regards to sharing of knowledge about chemical industry's safety and security management and assessment for accident prevention and preparedness, praiseworthy.

Mr Chairman,

The CWC and OPCW have greatly contributed to norm building against chemical weapons. The process of destroying chemical weapons needs to be given the highest priority. It is well understood that the process of complete destruction is not an easy process, owing to technical and financial reasons. It is expected in the larger interest of their commitment towards CWC, that both Russia and the United States would ensure that the process of destruction remains their top priority.

Finally, I would like to appreciate the efforts make by OPCW for engaging various non-governmental stakeholders to play a constructive role towards fulfilling the CWC's mandate. I thank you Mr Chairman – and thank you all, for your kind attention. I request that this statement be made part of the CSP record and posted on the OPCW external server and website.