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GERMANY

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SUSANNE BAUMANN
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ARMS CONTROL OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AT THE
TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairman,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished colleagues,

Please allow me to thank the Director-General for his comprehensive report and his outstanding work which is crucial to the success of OPCW. I would also like to commend the staff of the Technical Secretariat for their excellent work.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to address three additional points:

- (a) The present challenges to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the planned reform of our national legislation implementing the CWC,
- (b) a clarification regarding our co-sponsoring of the traditional paper on central nervous system-acting chemicals, and
- (c) some comments on the chemical weapons situation in Syria.

Trade vulnerabilities that allow dangerous weapons and materials to cross borders are a concern we address in many fora. Laws need to be updated to be effective and to respond to the evolving security environment. International norms have to be fully implemented on a national basis to counter existing threats. This is also true for the Chemical Weapons Convention. That is why Germany has decided to reform its national implementation law. Right now we are in the process of finalising this reform. We will add a legal basis for the use of OPCW's secure data exchange "SIX", sharpen the definition of the rights and duties of our chemical industries with respect to inspections, and introduce a newly created obligation to report "lost and found" chemicals to our authorities. We call on all states parties who have not already done so to make full implementation of the Convention their priority.

Germany has decided to again co-sponsor a paper destined to look more closely into incapacitating agents. We think the paper presents a solid basis for further debate on this important topic. However, we see a need for a deeper elaboration of some aspects, in particular with regard to more precise definitions of CNS, ICA and new types of chemicals which could potentially be used for purposes prohibited by the Convention, as well as their



relationship to the legal definition of RCA as stated in Article II paragraph 7 of the Convention. Germany is looking forward to an in-depth discussion of these issues which will ideally contribute to an updated version of this paper.

Finally, Mr Chairman, let me say some words on the Syria file.

Syria is still the greatest challenge to the OPCW since the Convention entered into force. While it was a great achievement of diplomacy that Syria joined the Convention in 2013, sadly, the country is still on our agenda. There are still significant gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in Syria's declaration to the OPCW. There are still reports about the systematic use of chemical weapons in Syria. Those responsible for their use still have to be held accountable. The identification of those responsible in four cases by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism is an important step towards that goal. However, the situation in Syria and the way Syria is handling its obligations towards the OPCW and the Convention is not acceptable. I do not want to go into further detail on these very serious issues. Rather, I would like to emphasise their consequences. The Syria file has been a challenge for the OPCW for way too long now. Germany cannot turn a blind eye to violations of the Convention. Yet, we would welcome it if the Executive Council were to be guided by consensus again. However, not at any price, the integrity of the OPCW as well as the Convention is not negotiable for Germany. We strongly welcome the fact that Spain presented a compromise draft decision during the last Session of the Executive Council, and that this draft decision was adopted by the Executive Council on 11 November. We very much welcome the fact that nations from all regional groups voted in its favour and we believe that the decision was very important with regard to preserving the integrity of the OPCW as well as the Convention.

Things can also work out differently. The destruction of the Libyan chemical weapons precursors clearly shows what the OPCW family can achieve if we all work hand in hand. This should be our example and our guide. Germany is proud to contribute to this aim by destroying these materials. Destruction is well on track. Germany stands ready to cooperate with countries that are willing to continue fulfilling their obligations to the Convention in the future.

Mr Chairman, I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties and be posted on the OPCW website. Thank you.

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