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Mr Chairman, Director-General, Excellencies, 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 one of the oldest and renowned think-tanks from India and has already completed fifty years of its existence.

IDSA has a well-qualified multi-disciplinary research faculty drawn from academia, defence forces and the civil services, representing a diversity of views. Research at the Institute is driven by a comprehensive agenda which includes issues related to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). Through its various publications, IDSA provides impartial analyses and presents wide ranging policy recommendations.

Mr Chairman,

Since its inception, IDSA has served as a forum for debating important aspects of national and international security. The Institute conducts several national and international conferences every year, and regularly holds round-tables and workshops on important themes. We have been fortunate to host various eminent dignitaries at our Institute which include Presidents/Prime Ministers and other important policy makers from various countries. On September 03rd, 2015, for example, the OPCW Director-General addressed us on issues concerning the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The institute publishes a biannual journal called *The CBW Magazine*. This journal exclusively addresses issues concerning chemical and biological weapons and is probably one of its kind available globally. The launch of this journal coincided with the completion of a decade of the CWC, i.e. 2007, and it has now completed ten years of publication. This

journal offers a forum for debate for C & B issues and various imminent scholars have contributed in this journal.

Mr Chairman,

I feel privileged to make a statement at the 22nd session of the CSP because this year we have celebrated the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the founding of the OPCW. The journey of the OPCW has been very challenging so far. However, owing to its relentless efforts, OPCW has ensured almost complete elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles and it is very satisfying to note that Russia has also fulfilled its obligations this year.

However, the job is far from over. Today, the challenge posed by terrorist organisations like ISIS indicates that there is no scope for complacency. The Syrian challenge has been an eye-opener. It has been a challenge for “international will” and the good news is that all the concerned parties have been very cooperative. However, there have been allegations of undisclosed sites and undeclared stockpiles. It is well understood that OPCW alone cannot handle this challenge and would need assistance from other important agencies.

Recently, two North Korean ships, possibility carrying WMD stockpiles to Syria, were reported to be intercepted. Naturally, such revelations do raise concerns about the chemical weapons threat in spite of the CWC being the most successful multilateral disarmament treaty in history. The danger from any possible covert CW proliferation either by a state or a non-state organization, should not be undermined.

Mr Chairman,

This past year has been a busy one for OPCW and various important events were organized. Also, efforts like preparation of a guidebook for medical practitioners which could help them provide assistance to victims of chemical weapons, are praiseworthy. The CWC and OPCW have greatly contributed to norm building against chemical weapons and I am sure that they will continue to do so. The United States is expected to take a few more years to destroy their chemical weapon stockpiles. Now I am positive that this being the only State Party remaining to fully destroy their weapons stockpile, the OPCW could offer them all the necessary assistance.

Various think-tanks, NGOs, civil society groups, and academicians are playing an important role in debating the agenda of the CWC and OPCW and raising public awareness. I am sure

that these organisations would also play a vital role towards ensuring the growth of chemistry and developing international cooperation in sponsoring chemical research and sharing of best practices amongst the agencies.

Mr Chairman,

I take this opportunity to congratulate H.E. Mr Ahmet Üzümcü for the successful completion of his seven years tenure and for taking the organisation to new heights and being instrumental in getting recognition by winning the 2013 Nobel Prize for peace. Also, I welcome the Spanish Ambassador, H.E. Fernando Arias González, as the new Director-General and assure him that various non-governmental stakeholders would play a constructive role towards fulfilling the CWC's mandate. I thank you Mr Chairman – and thank you all for your kind attention.