



**OPCW**

**Conference of the States Parties**

Twenty-Second Session  
27 November – 1 December 2017

C-22/NAT.27  
27 November 2017  
ENGLISH only

**GERMANY**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SUSANNE BAUMANN  
DEPUTY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER FOR DISARMAMENT AND  
ARMS CONTROL OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY  
AT THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES  
PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

The international arms control and non-proliferation architecture is under pressure. At the moment, we can witness this on many issues, and, sadly enough, this is also true for the Chemical Weapons Convention. The continuous use of chemical weapons in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the OPCW is an alarming development, and we must unite all our efforts to counter this dangerous trend.

The use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic has broken the long-standing taboo of using these deadly and cruel substances. After its first report in October 2016, which already clearly identified the Syrian Arab Republic as well as the IS as perpetrators, the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has produced yet another alarming account of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, also against civilians, among them women and children. Like many in this room, my Government is deeply concerned that the JIM found the Syrian Arab Republic to be responsible for the attack on Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017, using the nerve agent sarin. We are equally worried at the use of sulfur mustard by IS. In this context, it is deplorable that the United Nations Security Council was unable to agree on an extension of the JIM's mandate before it expired on 17 November. Germany regrets the Russian Federations' vetoes. It should be in every country's interest to ensure that chemical weapons are not being used anywhere. It is a shared responsibility of us all.

If the JIM cannot be extended, it is all the more important that we look for ways and means to bring those who use chemical weapons to justice. Continued impunity is not acceptable to us. Germany would strongly support such efforts.

Germany very much regrets that the special meeting of the Executive Council ended last Friday without a decision condemning the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic by the Syrian regime as well as the terrorist organisation IS according to the findings of the JIM. However, we should also note that many countries did in fact support the



decision tabled by the United States of America and co-sponsored by Estonia, Colombia and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The reports of the JIM also undoubtedly lead to the conclusion that the Syrian declaration of its chemical weapons stockpiles and facilities was at best incomplete. The OPCW has repeatedly called on the Syrian Arab Republic to answer the long list of questions concerning its declaration, and I would like to reiterate this appeal here and now.

On the other hand, it is a remarkable accomplishment that together, we have achieved the complete destruction of the remaining chemical weapons precursors in Libya. Germany will have destroyed all substances by the beginning of December. Such hands-on, coordinated and quickly implemented activities are an important contribution to prevent the proliferation of chemical weapons to non-State actors.

This brings me to one important future issue for the OPCW, which has been identified by all States Parties, an urgent priority that unites us all - the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors. The adoption of the decision on that topic in the Eighty-Sixth Session of the Executive Council this autumn was an important and timely expression of the common interest of all OPCW States Parties to work together to find common solutions to this dangerous challenge. We will continue to devote great attention to the issue. I am convinced that the OPCW has an important part to play here and that this will be further addressed with a view to next years' Review Conference. Another important priority for 2018 will be, in Germany's view, the fight against the resurgence of chemical weapons worldwide.

We will also look at developments of science and technology, i.a. the issue of Central Nervous System Acting Chemicals (CNSAC). Germany is co-sponsor of Australia's paper destined to look more closely into these incapacitating agents, which presents a solid basis for further debate on this important topic. In such a debate, we should take a closer look at precise definitions, including the legal definition of RCA as stated in Article II paragraph 7 of the Convention. We favour an active dialogue with all stakeholders, especially with regard to the question that CNS-acting agents must only be developed for and used in law enforcement settings in a manner that is safe and where its effects are foreseeable.

Furthermore, we are also aware of the necessity to advance our international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical activities. For several years, Germany has emphasised the importance of these activities under the Chemical Weapons Convention by organising training courses for interested OPCW States Parties on safety promotion in the chemical process industries – an endeavour highly valued among participants of States Parties from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

All these activities would not be possible without the dedicated staff at the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, and I would like to seize this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for their diligent work.

In July 2018, an important era for the OPCW will come to an end. Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü will conclude his term in the service of the OPCW. He has shown extraordinary commitment to the fight against chemical weapons, as well as outstanding diplomatic skill. Under your able leadership, Director Üzümcü, the reputation of the OPCW as guardian of the Chemical Weapons Convention has gained global recognition. The Nobel Peace Prize

awarded to the OPCW in 2013 highlights your term in office. On behalf of the German Government, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you.

We are delighted to have reached consensus in the Executive Council on the recommendation of Mr Üzümcü's successor, the outstanding diplomat Ambassador Fernando Arias. We are looking forward to cooperating closely with Ambassador Arias, who, I am convinced, will continue our successful work towards a world free from chemical weapons.

I wish us all a successful conference.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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