



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Fourth Special Session
26 and 27 June 2018

C-SS-4/NAT.3
27 June 2018
ENGLISH only

ALBANIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ADIA SAKIQI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you Ambassador Bellouki for chairing this special session whose convocation Albania supported. The Government of Albania aligns itself with the European Union's statement, but I would like to add our position on the important issue of the global ban on chemical weapons and the strengthening of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

We believe in the goal of this special session which is upholding the global ban on chemical weapons and strengthening the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Albania was the first country to get rid of its chemical weapons arsenal in 2007. Today, 11 years later, we are more than committed to see that the Chemical Weapons Convention lives up to its obligations and that the States Parties preserve the integrity of the Convention. It is also an honour to speak at this Conference led for the last time by Director-General His Excellency, Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü. Thank you, Excellency, we wish you lots of success in your future career.

Albania would like to stress the urgency not only to promote but also to defend the Convention and its credibility. We strongly support the effective implementation as well as the universalisation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

All of us in this room, the countries and the citizens whom we represent, remain confronted with the increased use of chemical weapons. These unacceptable practices oblige us, the international community, to identify and hold accountable the individuals, entities, groups or governments responsible for the use of chemical weapons. Albania supports all efforts to tackle the challenges regarding chemical terrorism and commends the professional, impartial and independent work of the Technical Secretariat, the Fact-Finding Mission and its Declaration Assessment Team.

However, the international community cannot afford to continue without an attribution mechanism to identify perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons. If accountability is avoided, the potential acceptance of the use of chemical weapons as weapons of war and



terror will not be deterred. We are convened here to show our commitment to zero tolerance for impunity for those that used chemical weapons.

We regret the failure to reach an agreement regarding the renewal of the mandate of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). Restoring an independent mechanism for attribution has become particularly important during this time of increased use of chemical weapons and no other mechanism can address, at another level, this abhorrent practice. The Director-General has the authority, as well as the independent, impartial and professional capacity in house to ensure the respect for the provisions established by the Convention. We urgently need arrangements, and it is time to invite the Director-General to address this need and challenge. Attribution can and should be addressed by the OPCW.

Finally I would add that Albania supports the draft decision proposed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in yesterday's session, because we cannot fully reach our goals in the Convention if, we do not, at the same time, hold the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks accountable.

Albania honestly hopes that we will be able to give to the new Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Fernando Arias, a clear mandate and continuous support in this joint commitment to uphold the global ban and to devise new measures to strengthen the norm against the use of chemical weapons.

I would kindly ask the distribution of this statement as an official document of the Conference and to publish it on the public websites of the Organisation.

Thank you.

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