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**STATEMENT BY MS. ELI JONSVIK
SECTION FOR DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AT THE SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

First, let me take the opportunity to welcome you back in the chair. We are certain that you will guide us steadily through the issues before us. We also very much appreciate your consultations in the run-up to the Seventy-First Session of the Council. We hope the meeting will run smoothly.

As long as destruction is not completed, it will remain the core objective of this Organisation. While recognising that important progress has been made, we urge the possessor States to do their utmost to meet their destruction targets as soon as possible.

The importance of universal adherence to the Convention is highlighted by the current escalation of violence in Syria. The use of such weapons would be an outrageous crime with dire consequences. Chemical weapons are not only a security concern; they also have profound humanitarian implications. Norway urges Syria not to use these abhorrent weapons under any circumstances. All parties must respect international law which strictly prohibits the use of chemical weapons.

We encourage the Director-General to continue to follow the situation in Syria closely and to maintain the necessary readiness in order to respond to any request from States Parties regarding assistance and protection as mandated in Article X of the Convention. The Director-General must also be prepared to respond to any request from the United Nations Secretary-General, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention and the Relationship Agreement between the UN and the OPCW.

It is vital that the OPCW maintain a high standard of readiness to conduct a challenge inspection or an investigation of alleged use in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. This could be done through, inter alia, the use of table-top exercises and mock inspections, as well as developing and sharpening the tools available to the Secretariat.

The Third Review Conference will be an important milestone for the Organisation in giving it direction for the next five years. Norway recognises the work of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparations of the Review Conference under the very able leadership of H.E. Ambassador Nassima Baghli of Algeria, and will continue to contribute to the process in



a constructive way. As a general guideline, we wish to underline the importance of treating the Convention as a single entity and not allow preferential approaches to its different aspects.

Let us briefly touch upon some of the issues that we find important:

That only about half of all States Parties have fully implemented Article VII is clearly a challenge to the Convention's effectiveness. There is a clear need to approach the problem in a constructive fashion, and we welcome the development of a tailor-made approach by the Technical Secretariat. We look forward to it progressing further, notably through a pilot project. We see this as a first step on the road to full Convention implementation in all States Parties.

The Third Review conference is a review of the operation of the Convention. However, it is also an opportunity to look at the implications that new opportunities and risks have for the Convention regime as described in the report of the Advisory Panel on the Future Priorities of the Organisation, issued in 2011. According to the Convention, reviews shall take into account any relevant scientific and technological developments. States Parties should in this regard pay special attention to the well founded advice from the Scientific Advisory Board, and make sure that the Review Conference really brings this on board.

One of these issues is that of toxic chemicals in law enforcement. Norway agrees with the Board that the technical discussion on the potential use of toxic chemicals for law enforcement have been exhaustive. We find it positive that the Director-General responds to the Scientific Advisory Board that the Secretariat will pursue efforts to enhance its chemical analysis capabilities and will work with designated laboratories on this issue. We would like to support the Director-General in suggesting that the States Parties might consider using the Third Review Conference as an opportunity to further discuss the broader implications of the use of toxic chemicals for law-enforcement purposes.

External stakeholders, such as chemical industry associations, NGOs, think tanks, academia and others, can provide valuable ideas and input to the advancement of the Convention. Other comparable instruments, such as the Biological Weapons Convention and the NPT, have a more open and inclusive atmosphere for civil society. We believe that this can be developed also in the OPCW without posing a threat to the confidentiality regime of the Organisation.

Madam Chairperson, fellow delegates,

As the majority of contemporary challenges and threats are global, we need to address them collectively. The Review Conference is an opportunity to take a closer look at the Convention than we usually do. We should collectively consider how the Convention can evolve further and remain relevant.

Finally, may I request that this statement be treated as an official document of the Seventy-First Session of the Executive Council. Thank you.